

# INSPECTION REPORT

**5 E Ltd**

**07 April 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 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 learning within the remit of a single inspectorate. The ALI is responsible for inspecting a wide range of government-funded learning, including:

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

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

## Overall judgement

Where the overall judgement is that the provision is adequate, only those aspects of the provision which are less than satisfactory will be reinspected.

Provision will normally be deemed to be inadequate where:

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

This provision will be subject to a full reinspection.

The final decision as to whether the provision is inadequate rests with the Chief Inspector of Adult Learning. A statement as to whether the provision is adequate or not is included in the summary section of the inspection report.

# INSPECTION REPORT

## 5 E Ltd

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## INSPECTION REPORT

### DESCRIPTION OF THE PROVIDER

1. 5E Ltd was established in 1998 to provide New Deal 25+ and work-based learning for adults in North London. It is a not-for-profit company without any share capital. At the time of the inspection, it was applying for registered charity status. It has a head office and a training centre, both in the London Borough of Haringey. 5E Ltd offers basic employability training (BET), short intensive basic skills (SIBS) training, national vocational qualifications (NVQs) and other vocational and examination-based qualifications in information and communications technology (ICT). There are currently 63 learners on work-based learning for adults, of whom 56 are on the BET programme and seven are on a SIBS programme. There are also 17 learners on work-based learning for young people programmes, working towards examination-based qualifications, or other recognised vocational qualifications in ICT.

2. 5E Ltd funds its training provision through the North London Learning and Skills Council (LSC), Jobcentre Plus, European Social Fund (ESF) and single regeneration budget (SRB) initiatives. 5E Ltd's initial advice and guidance is subcontracted to a registered charity. 5E has a management committee and a senior management team comprising a director, an operations manager and a programme manager. The director and the operations manager have responsibility for strategic planning. The senior management team share the responsibility for the operational management of the business. There is also a finance manager and a part-time personnel officer. An advice and guidance manager oversees the work of four employment officers. There is an ICT applications manager who leads a team of nine ICT trainers, three of whom are part time. An English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) manager leads a team of 15 ESOL trainers and support workers, three of whom are part time. There is also a senior administration officer and five administration assistants. The company has expanded rapidly over the past three years and currently employs 44 staff.

3. The London Borough of Haringey has one of the highest unemployment rates in the UK, at 10 per cent, compared to 5.6 per cent for Greater London. It also has one of the most ethnically diverse populations in Europe, with an estimated 19,000 refugees and asylum seekers, comprising about 9 per cent of the local population. Many refugees and asylum seekers have very poor English language skills and many have basic skills needs in their own language. The government's index of local deprivation (DETR) identifies Haringey as the 13th most deprived authority in England and 35 per cent of unemployed people have no qualifications at all.

### SCOPE OF PROVISION

#### Information & communications technology

4. There are 17 learners on ICT programmes working towards qualifications at level 2. Learners are offered the choice of studying for an examination-based qualification or a

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vocationally related level 2 qualification (VRQ). The VRQ is offered in the subject areas of information technology (IT) user and IT practitioner. All learners on the programmes are unemployed and attend the training centre for training and assessment. Learners can join the programme at any time during the year.

### Foundation programmes

5. There are 56 clients on the BET programme in ESOL. All of the clients are from disadvantaged and minority ethnic communities. They are referred to 5E Ltd by Jobcentre Plus because they are unable to gain employment due to their lack of English language skills. The programme lasts for 26 weeks and clients attend the training centre for a minimum of 21 hours a week. They are taught in small groups at appropriate levels from entry level 1 to entry level 3. Clients who do not speak English have an introductory programme before progressing to an entry-level 1 group. All clients can work towards an ESOL certificate as well as developing ICT and jobsearch skills during their course. There are also seven clients on the SIBS programme.

### ABOUT THE INSPECTION

Number of inspectors	4
Number of inspection days	16
Number of learner interviews	58
Number of staff interviews	41
Number of subcontractor interviews	1
Number of locations/sites/learning centres visited	1

### OVERALL JUDGEMENT

6. The quality of the provision is adequate to meet the reasonable needs of those receiving it. More specifically, 5E Ltd's leadership and management and equal opportunities arrangements are outstanding and its quality assurance arrangements are good. The quality of learning in foundation programmes is outstanding and the ICT training is good.

### GRADES

*grade 1= outstanding, grade 2 = good, grade 3 = satisfactory, grade 4 = unsatisfactory, grade 5 = very weak*

<b>Leadership and management</b>	<b>1</b>
Contributory grades:	
Equality of opportunity	1
Quality assurance	2

Information & communications technology	2
Contributory grades:	
Work-based learning for young people	2

Foundation programmes	1
Contributory grades:	
New Deal 25+ and work-based learning for adults	1

## KEY FINDINGS

### Achievement and standards

7. **There are good achievement rates on foundation and ICT programmes.** For ICT programmes in 2001-02, the achievement rate was 67 per cent. In the current year, 2002-03, of the 41 learners who have started a programme, 49 per cent have achieved a full qualification and a further 42 per cent of learners are still in training. Current learners are making good progress and the standard of their work is high. Standards of teaching are good, but the range of qualifications available is limited. Clients on foundation programmes significantly improve their fluency and confidence in the use of English language. Great emphasis is placed by tutors on the development of all four skills of reading, writing, speaking and listening effectively. Challenging goals are set and achieved. In 2001-02, 54 per cent of learners gained ESOL qualifications. At the end of the programmes, clients are well prepared for effective participation in the workplace and in the local community. There has been a marked increase in the number of learners gaining jobs during 2002-03, with 30 per cent of each month's leavers gaining jobs, compared to 13 per cent in 2001-02. Clients receive exceptionally good support in training.

8. **Retention rates are good in ICT and improving in foundation programmes.** In ICT the retention rate was 67 per cent for 2001-02. On foundation programmes retention is satisfactory, and although the rate has fallen since 2000-01 this reflects the increasing number of clients with severe barriers to learning and the increase of refugee clients with temporary accommodation being rehoused outside the borough.

### Quality of education and training

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	4	1	0	0	0	5
Foundation programmes	0	4	3	7	0	0	0	14
<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>19</b>

9. **All of the teaching sessions graded by inspectors were satisfactory or better.** Fifty per cent of the foundation teaching sessions were good or very good. Eighty per cent of the ICT training sessions were graded as good. In the best training sessions, good use is made of a variety of teaching methods. Support workers are used effectively to help the slower members of the classes. Learners on all programmes make good progress and consistently achieve their learning targets.

10. **There is a wide range of resources for ICT programmes.** There are seven dedicated ICT classrooms, with 71 available workstations. Six of the classrooms have new equipment to industry standard, which includes large, flat-screen monitors, fast Internet access and networking to the company's main server. Good-quality handouts are produced and good use is made of pictures to help learners with language difficulties. The classroom used for installation and support of IT is particularly good. There are considerable amounts of ICT equipment in various stages of assembly for learners to practise their maintenance skills.

11. **There are thorough inductions and initial assessment of learner's needs.** Learners receive an initial assessment of their basic skills needs which is used effectively to plan their learning programme. Induction packs have been translated into the languages most commonly spoken in the local community. Exceptionally good use is made of translators. Staff are careful to make sure that learners understand the structure of the programme and are clear about their rights and responsibilities.

12. **There is good monitoring of learners' progress.** The individual learning plan process includes pictures which illustrate the learning target. Learners have individual interviews with skilled staff to agree their personal targets. Individual learning plans are updated at each progress review for foundation learners, but they are not used so effectively for ICT learners. However, there is close monitoring of all learners' progress.

13. **There is particularly good support for learners.** An advice and guidance service is provided by the subcontractor, which is appreciated by learners. Help is given with accommodation needs, finance and legal matters. A crèche facility is provided free of charge. Learners on foundation courses are provided with files, textbooks and workbooks to support their programmes of study. All staff readily provide individual tuition for learners after classes, or on additional days including Saturdays. Learners on the ICT programmes have literacy support provided by ESOL tutors. There are particularly good working relationships between learners and staff.

14. **In some foundation sessions, resources are not used effectively.** There is too much use of text books, even though good-quality teaching resources are available at the training centre. Sometimes poor-quality handouts are used, which are difficult for the learners to use confidently.

15. **A narrow range of ICT qualifications is offered to learners.** All learners receive advice and guidance before joining an ICT programme, but the initial assessment of their ICT skills is poor. Insufficient attention is paid to learners' previously acquired skills and knowledge. None of the current learners is working towards a level 3 qualification,



irrespective of their prior achievement. Many learners achieve qualifications at level 2 very quickly and are not sufficiently challenged. 5E Ltd did not appreciate the full range of ICT courses which it could offer.

### **Leadership and management**

16. **5E Ltd has particularly strong strategic management.** The business plan is clear and well written. It sets the values, aims and objectives of the company. Good use is made of local market and socio-economic information and the company is exceptionally responsive to local needs. Particular attention is paid to the financial stability of the company and to trends in learners' achievements. The senior management team have monthly strategic management meetings to discuss the future development of the company. Throughout the company, there is a strong focus on the success of learners.

17. **Staff are recruited and developed effectively.** Around 90 per cent of staff are ex-clients. Staff are able to empathise with the difficulties faced by the learners and use their own experiences to help them. Over 30 languages are spoken by staff and exceptionally good use is made of the staff's translation abilities to ensure that learners gain maximum benefit from their training. There is a high ratio of staff to learners in all teaching sessions and good use is made of support trainers to assist tutors. There is a detailed programme of classroom observations to support tutors in developing their teaching skills. 5E Ltd regards the development of its staff as a priority.

18. **There is particularly good monitoring of the finance and performance aspects of the provision.** There is close financial monitoring, and monthly cashflow and management reports are discussed at senior management meetings. Extensive use is made of data and statistics to monitor and evaluate learner, programme and project performance. 5E Ltd uses its own database to produce a wide range of management reports. Monitoring is carried out at an individual learner's level to plan recruitment and to identify any slow progress or poor attendance. There is careful monitoring of programme performance against financial expenditure, to ensure value for money. Weekly reports about programme performance are used to set targets for staff. There is detailed weekly monitoring of learner's achievements and attendance. Action is taken immediately if any learners are failing to attend or making slow progress.

19. **The promotion of equality of opportunity is particularly strong.** Staff are from a variety of ethnic origins and reflect the different cultures of learners. There is a free crèche available for learners and staff. Women-only classes are provided to meet the cultural and religious needs of some learners. There is good access for people with disabilities. Equality of opportunity is a standard agenda item at meetings. Marketing material is available in several languages and effectively promotes equality. 5E Ltd collects and analyses data to monitor recruitment by gender, age and ethnicity. Data are analysed to allow a comparison of achievement between genders and different minority ethnic groups. Effective action has been taken to build relationships with the local communities.

20. **There is exceptionally good support to meet learners' diverse needs.** There is

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effective one-to-one support for literacy and ESOL. Surgeries offering support with personal problems are now offered outside of normal hours of tuition and at weekends. Timetables are flexible to allow for religious and cultural needs and rooms are made available for prayer. Learners from very different backgrounds and cultures demonstrate good tolerance and respect for each other. 5E recognises the diverse needs of its learners and staff and has introduced family-friendly working hours and timetables that include early evening and weekend sessions.

21. **Particularly effective use is made of classroom observations.** Tutors are observed every three months and given detailed feedback, including identification of areas for development. The feedback includes planning, effectiveness, teaching environment, professionalism and monitoring of learners' progress and achievements. It includes the tutors' strengths and weaknesses. In addition to formal observations, there are also frequent, unannounced informal classroom visits to check on tutors' performance and to monitor any previously identified action points.

22. Although there are very good informal arrangements to improve quality, **there is insufficient monitoring of quality assurance processes.** There is no member of staff with overall responsibility for quality assurance, instead it is shared by senior managers. There is insufficient planning and monitoring to ensure that the different quality assurance procedures take place. There is insufficient recording and reviewing of some action plans. The quality assurance arrangements are not sufficiently evaluated for effectiveness.

*The following strengths and weaknesses were identified during this inspection:*

### **Leadership and management**

#### **Strengths**

- exceptionally strong strategic leadership
- very effective recruitment and development of staff
- particularly good monitoring of finance and performance
- very strong promotion of equality of opportunity
- exceptionally good support to meet learners' diverse needs
- particularly effective use of observation to monitor quality of training
- very effective action to promote continuous improvement

#### **Weaknesses**

- insufficient monitoring of quality assurance processes

## **Information & communications technology**

### **Strengths**

- good retention and achievement rates
- good teaching
- wide range of resources
- particularly good support for learners

### **Weaknesses**

- insufficient range of qualifications to meet learner's needs

## **Foundation programmes**

### **Strengths**

- good development of employment skills
- good teaching
- very thorough and effective inductions
- good use of individual learning plans and progress reviews
- very good use of ICT and jobsearch to develop language skills
- exceptionally good support for clients

### **Weaknesses**

- some poor use of teaching resources

### **WHAT LEARNERS LIKE ABOUT 5 E LTD:**

- the good teaching which makes them achieve more than they think they can
- that all staff are helpful and listen to their problems and give them help both in and out of classes
- realising the benefits of training in order to get jobs
- gaining confidence and enjoying using the computers even though some have no previous experience
- help with talking to teachers at school about their children's work
- outings and visits to local places of interest

### **WHAT LEARNERS THINK 5 E LTD COULD IMPROVE:**

- the time it takes to get results and feedback from tests
- the support for learners who join an ICT programme and have to catch up
- the number of classrooms for some courses
- the access during the working day to the Internet, computers and printers for ICT learners
- the number of practical activities to relieve theory teaching for ESOL clients
- the length of courses to allow ESOL clients more practice in speaking, grammar and writing

## **KEY CHALLENGES FOR 5 E LTD:**

- introduce systematic monitoring of the quality assurance arrangements
- introduce a more appropriate range of ICT qualifications for learners on level 2 programmes
- ensure sharing of good practice between teachers
- continue to improve achievement of qualifications and jobs

## DETAILED INSPECTION FINDINGS

### LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

**Grade 1**

*The following strengths and weaknesses were identified during this inspection:*

#### **Strengths**

- exceptionally strong strategic leadership
- very effective recruitment and development of staff
- particularly good monitoring of finance and performance
- very strong promotion of equality of opportunity
- exceptionally good support to meet learners' diverse needs
- particularly effective use of observation to monitor quality of training
- very effective action to promote continuous improvement

#### **Weaknesses**

- insufficient monitoring of quality assurance processes

23. There is particularly strong strategic management at 5E Ltd. It has a well-written business plan which sets the values, aims and objectives of the company. Good use is made of local market and socio-economic information and the company is exceptionally responsive to local needs. Particular attention is paid to the financial stability of the company and to trends in learners' achievements. All staff are aware of 5E Ltd's values and objectives and staff are fully involved in all management decisions, such as which programmes to expand, and whether to bid for ESF or SRB project funding. The senior management team have monthly strategic management meetings to discuss the future development of the company. There is a strong focus on the success of learners throughout the company.

24. The recruitment and development of staff is very effective. Around 90 per cent of staff are ex-learners and are therefore able to empathise with the difficulties faced by learners. Over 30 languages are spoken by staff and exceptionally good use is made of their abilities to ensure that learners can gain maximum benefit from their training. This also builds learners' confidence and helps them to settle in to their training programmes quickly and successfully. Staff have excellent inter personal skills and many have extensive experience of teaching overseas. There is a high ratio of staff to learners in all teaching sessions and good use is made of support trainers to assist tutors. There is a detailed programme of classroom observations to support tutors in developing their teaching skills. All staff are encouraged to gain additional qualifications in teaching and in their own area of expertise. There is a clear management structure and staff are actively encouraged to progress within the company, moving to positions of increased responsibility as soon as they are able. 5E Ltd regards the development of its staff as a priority and is proud of their achievements.

25. There is particularly good monitoring of finance and performance. Monthly cashflow and management reports are discussed at senior management meetings. Cashflows are produced to cover the period of funding, in some cases up to 2006. Quarterly trial balances are calculated and 5E Ltd always has accurate information about its financial position. There is careful monitoring of programme performance against financial expenditure to ensure value for money. Since 2000, income has trebled because of 5E Ltd's successful bids for ESF and SRB funding. This is used to provide projects which support the development of the local community and local businesses, and has helped to increase job opportunities within the local area.

26. Extensive use is made of data and statistics to monitor and evaluate learners', programme and project performance. 5E Ltd has designed and implemented its own database which is used to produce a wide range of management reports. Weekly reports on programme performance are used to set targets for staff. Contingency plans allow for action in the event of any loss of funding. Monitoring is carried out at an individual learner level to plan recruitment and to identify any slow progress or poor attendance. Detailed records are kept which monitor each individual learner's progress. These records are produced weekly and build up a detailed and accurate picture of each learner's performance. 5E Ltd plans to broaden its programmes to include family learning, in response to learners' concerns about the education of their children. The organisation is also currently working on innovative bids for funding to allow it to continue to offer training to learners who complete their BET programme but do not find a job and may need additional ESOL and vocational skills training.

27. Good-quality resources are available in both areas of learning. The senior management team ensures that the financial expenditure of the company is well-monitored and that it obtains value for money. Staffing levels are good and accommodation is appropriate to the learners' requirements. Some of the teaching sessions in the foundation programmes do not use the resources available to full effect.

28. 5E Ltd provides very good literacy, numeracy and language support for learners in ICT. It is particularly good for those learners with literacy problems. ESOL tutors are occupationally skilled in basic ICT operations and are able to relate the support to the programme. Foundation learners are particularly well supported in English language skills. Significant emphasis is placed on learners acquiring fluency in all aspects of the language. All learners are effectively assessed and inducted into the programmes.

### **Equality of opportunity**

### **Contributory grade 1**

29. There is very strong promotion of equality of opportunity within 5E Ltd. Staff are from a variety of minority ethnic groups and reflect the different cultures of learners. There is a free crèche available for learners and staff. Women-only classes are provided to meet the cultural and religious needs of some learners. There is good access for learners with disabilities. Equality of opportunity is a standard agenda item at meetings. Marketing material is available in several languages and effectively promotes equality. Material in Somali was produced by a learner, as no member of staff could speak that

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language. Action has been taken in building a relationship with the local Turkish community. A Turkish member of staff has been recruited to liaise with local Turkish employers to identify work-placement opportunities for learners.

30. Data are analysed to monitor recruitment by gender, age and ethnicity. It was identified that females are under represented, particularly on the ICT programmes, and action was taken by the marketing department. This has resulted in an increase in the number of female learners on the ICT programmes. Data are analysed to allow a comparison of achievement between genders and different minority ethnic groups.

31. Every three months, multi-cultural award ceremonies are held to celebrate the success of learners who have completed their programmes. Learners organise the event and produce food from their different cultures for the lunch which follows. Learners have a good understanding of their rights and responsibilities with regards to equality of opportunity.

32. There is exceptionally good support to meet learners' diverse needs, including effective one-to-one support. Throughout the programme there is on-going support with personal and training needs. Rooms are made available for prayer. Timetables are flexible to allow Muslims not to attend on a Friday as this is their day of prayer. Learners from very different backgrounds and cultures demonstrate good tolerance and respect for each other. Staff maintain good classroom discipline. Action is taken quickly and effectively if there is any inappropriate behaviour or language. A learner was suspended for inappropriate behaviour and subsequently apologised for their actions. 5E Ltd has satisfactory complaints and anti-harassment procedures. Learners with greater skills and knowledge support their peers in the classroom, helping their progress. 5E Ltd recognises the diverse needs of its learners and staff and as a result has introduced family friendly working hours and timetables that include early evening and weekend sessions.

33. The equal opportunities policy is detailed and contains reference to relevant legislation, including the Race Relations Act (amended 2000). It does not however, refer to the latest legislation, the Special Educational Needs Act of 2001. The language used in the policy is not suitable for learners who speak English as an additional language, although care is taken to explain the policy at induction. 5E Ltd monitors recruitment from each minority ethnic group and publishes the results in its business plan. The self-assessment process and development plan covers all aspects of equality.

### **Quality assurance**

### **Contributory grade 2**

34. There is particularly effective use of observation to monitor the quality of training and inspectors found good-quality teaching in both areas of learning offered by 5E Ltd. Tutors are observed every three months and given detailed feedback, including identification of areas for development or action points. The feedback covers planning, effectiveness, the teaching environment, professionalism and monitoring of learners' progress and achievements. It includes the tutors' strengths and weaknesses. In addition to formal observations, there are also frequent unannounced informal classroom visits to check on tutor's performance and monitor any previously identified action points. New



staff are observed more frequently. Observation may be by senior staff, or fellow teachers. Training is given to resolve any areas in need of improvement, and this is flexible to meet the needs of part-time staff. The subcontractor who provides initial advice and guidance is also monitored by observation of learners' interviews.

35. 5E Ltd has a good level of commitment to continuous improvement. All staff are involved in reviewing the performance of the programmes and improving the learners' experiences. There are very many effective arrangements to improve the quality of provision. Staff meet regularly, formally and informally with learners to talk about general issues and collect feedback. Actions have been taken quickly to resolve any problems. Learner focus groups are held regularly. One for ESOL, held in November 2002, was used to discuss issues such as mixed abilities in classes, interruptions, disturbances and payments. Action plans were agreed with learners. A subsequent meeting in March 2003 discussed learners' concerns about IT sessions and it was agreed to provide more IT support. A new process of efficiency performance indicators is being introduced to monitor a number of processes. New working procedures have been introduced to fill in gaps in the quality assurance framework. There are policies and procedures which cover all aspects of the learners' experience. An internal audit procedure has been introduced to monitor the paperwork in learners' files. Each month, 10 per cent of the files are sampled and action is taken to resolve any problems. Staff meetings are held monthly to discuss issues and identify action required.

36. The self-assessment process has continually developed over the past four years. The self-assessment report produced for the inspection was largely accurate and inspectors agreed with most of the strengths, weaknesses and grades given. 5E Ltd is very self-critical and the report focuses strongly on the learners' experiences. Advice has been taken from external consultants to improve the process. Although not all staff are involved directly, senior managers obtain information from each department to help to produce the report. Meetings are held to discuss self-assessment. Feedback from learners and other data are also used. There are now separate, specific meetings to discuss progress using the development plan. The development plan identifies specific targets, for example to improve retention and achievement by 15 per cent. However, there is no detailed, recorded strategy to show how these targets will be achieved.

37. Internal verification is satisfactory and carried out to awarding bodies' requirements. There is sufficient sampling, which includes observation of assessors. However, the feedback is not recorded. There is an over-reliance on one internal verifier responsible for all internal verification.

38. There is insufficient monitoring of quality assurance processes. There is no member of staff with overall responsibility for quality assurance, instead it is shared by senior managers. Regular observations of training take place, with feedback to trainers, including action points. However, this is not formally planned, trainers are not routinely given copies of the feedback and it is not clear whether any action points are subsequently reviewed. Progress reviews are observed, but there is no recording of this. Support is given to learners, but not always recorded and not effectively evaluated. This weakness was identified in the self-assessment report. Learners' progress is monitored

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on a database and any slow progress is discussed with the learner's tutor. However, this action is not recorded or formally reviewed. Feedback from learners at the beginning is gained, mid-term and at the end of the programme. There is some analysis which shows that learners are very satisfied with their training, but there is no action plan resulting from this analysis. Meetings are frequent and varied, and identify actions with target dates and named responsibility, but there is no follow-up of progress at the next meeting.

## AREAS OF LEARNING

### Information & communications technology

Grade 2

Programmes inspected	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Work-based learning for young people	17	2

*The following strengths and weaknesses were identified during this inspection:*

#### Strengths

- good retention and achievement rates
- good teaching
- wide range of resources
- particularly good support for learners

#### Weaknesses

- insufficient range of qualifications to meet learner's needs

#### Achievement and standards

39. The retention and achievement rates for learners on ICT programmes are good. In 2001-02 the retention and achievement rates were both 67 per cent. In the current year, 2002-03, of the 41 learners who have started a programme, 49 per cent have achieved a full qualification and a further 42 per cent of learners are still in training. This strength was not identified in the self-assessment report. Current learners are making good progress and their standard of work is high. Some of the learners already have ICT skills when they start training and their progress towards achievement of the full qualification is particularly quick. These learners are capable of achieving a higher level qualification, but the programme offered is not always sufficiently challenging. However, many other learners have no previous experience of ICT and they quickly gain considerable confidence and enjoy their training. Many use the ICT facilities after normal training hours to further develop their skills. They are well-motivated and their attendance and performance during classes are particularly good.

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

LSC funded work-based learning																	
NVQ Training	2002-03		2001-02														
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
	Number of starts	41		96													
Retained*	0		64	67													
Successfully completed	20		64	67													
Still in learning	17		0	0													

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

## Quality of education and training

40. Four of the teaching sessions observed by inspectors during the inspection were good and one was satisfactory. The teaching sessions are at an appropriate level for the course being taught. Teachers use a wide range of teaching methods. Online teaching is supported by sessions of tutor-led teaching, using computer-based aids, overhead projectors, whiteboards and practical demonstrations. Mock tests are readily available and are used to prepare the learners' for the external examinations. Tutors make good use of these tests in order to make sure that learners are familiar with the language and terminology used in the examination papers. First-time pass rates are over 90 per cent and learners can quickly resit any tests if they fail. Each teaching session has a lesson plan, which clearly identifies objectives, lesson content, and methods of evaluating learning. Although differentiated learning is not identified on the lesson plans, the tutors do use differentiated teaching techniques. More difficult tasks and questions are used for quick learners and reinforcement techniques for slow learners. All learners are actively working and new skills are quickly learned and practised. There is particularly good attendance at teaching sessions and learners work diligently with enthusiasm and motivation. All of the ICT staff either have, or are working towards, a suitable level of ICT qualification, as well as teaching certificates. Many of the staff have considerable industrial experience in IT services or software development. There is a particularly good ratio of staff to learners.

41. A wide range of resources is available to learners. There are seven dedicated ICT classrooms, with 71 available workstations. Six of the classrooms have new, industrial standard equipment, including large, flat-screen monitors and fast Internet access which is networked to the company's main server. Good-quality handouts are produced and many use pictures to help learners with language difficulties. The size of the classrooms are generally satisfactory, although some of the workstations are cramped. The classroom used for the installation and support of IT is particularly good. There is a

considerable amount of equipment for learners to practise on. This includes computers in varying states of repair to enable learners to demonstrate their problem-solving and repair techniques.

42. There is particularly good support for learners, including an advice and guidance service provided by the subcontractor which is greatly valued by learners. Learners are offered help with accommodation needs, finance and legal matters. A free crèche facility is provided. Learners on the ICT programmes have an initial assessment to identify their levels of literacy and numeracy at the start of their course. ESOL tutors give particularly good individual support for learners with literacy difficulties. As all ESOL tutors are trained in basic ICT skills they are able to relate the literacy support directly to the learners' qualifications. ICT tutors are also available out of hours to help learners who need extra teaching or support. 5E Ltd provide open access to the ICT facilities so that learners can practise their skills outside normal training time.

43. The programmes currently offered to learners require internal examination marking and moderation. Inspectors' findings agreed that the marking system and the processes for internal moderation are satisfactory and in line with awarding body requirements. Learners are required to take mock tests and achieve a satisfactory pass rate before they take external examinations. Assessment is satisfactory, but where qualifications require internal verification there is currently only one member of staff qualified to carry this out.

44. The programmes offered by 5E Ltd are VRQs for IT users at level 1 and 2 and ICT practitioners (system support) at level 2. None of the current learners is working towards a level 3 qualification, irrespective of their prior achievement. All learners receive advice and guidance before joining an ICT programme, but the initial assessment of learners' ICT skills is poor. Insufficient attention is paid to learners' prior learning and experience. Many learners achieve qualifications at level 2 very quickly and are not sufficiently challenged. The narrow range of qualifications offered is not always suitable to meet the needs and aspirations of the learners. The choice of qualification is too often based on what the learner would enjoy rather than the qualification they need to achieve personal goals. Most learners say that their main goal is to find employment or enter full-time education, but many are working towards qualifications that are not appropriate to these ambitions. 5E Ltd did not appreciate the full range of ICT courses which it could offer.

### **Leadership and management**

45. Programmes are very well planned and organised. Good targets are set for achievement and retention and are monitored by staff on a weekly basis. There is particularly good staff development and staff are encouraged to continue to improve their own ICT skills and knowledge. There is exceptionally strong promotion of equality of opportunity and learners are actively encouraged to work together and support each other. Anti-social behaviour is quickly and effectively stopped. The ICT teaching team meet regularly both formally and informally during working lunches. Communication within the team is good. The self-assessment report accurately identified the strengths and weaknesses and inspectors agreed with the grade given. Wherever possible, ICT classes are amalgamated in order to be cost effective and to make the best use of

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available resources.

**Foundation programmes****Grade 1**

Programmes inspected	Number of learners	Contributory grade
New Deal 25+ and work-based learning for adults	63	1

*The following strengths and weaknesses were identified during this inspection:*

**Strengths**

- good development of employment skills
- good teaching
- very thorough and effective inductions
- good use of individual learning plans and progress reviews
- very good use of ICT and jobsearch to develop language skills
- exceptionally good support for clients

**Weaknesses**

- some poor use of teaching resources

**Achievement and standards**

46. Employment skills are well developed on the foundation programmes. Most clients join the programmes with extremely poor, or no English language skills. Many have basic skills needs in their own first language. During the programme they greatly increase their fluency and confidence in the use of English. Teachers place significant emphasis on the development of all four skills of reading, writing, speaking and listening effectively. Challenging goals are set and achieved. At the end of the programmes, clients are well prepared to participate effectively in the workplace and the local community. Clients are exceptionally well motivated and quickly realise that improving their English language skills will greatly enhance their chances of finding employment. Levels of attendance are particularly good. Clients take responsibility for their own learning. Their work files are well organised and each week they complete homework in their course books. They are also able to develop ICT skills which they use effectively for jobsearch. The achievement of ICT skills also increases clients' ability to get jobs. In 2001-02, 54 per cent of learners gained ESOL qualifications and 14 per cent of learners have already achieved qualifications during 2002-03. There has been a marked increase in learners gaining jobs in 2002-03, with job outcomes averaging 30 per cent per month compared with 13 per cent in 2001-02. Retention is satisfactory and although it has fallen since 2000-01, this reflects the increasing number of clients with severe barriers to learning.

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

<b>Jobcentre Plus funded programmes</b>																	
<b>New Deal 25+ and work-based learning for adults</b>	2002-03		2001-02		2000-01		1999-2000										
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
	Number of starts	206		162		241		100									
Retained*	63		104	64	213	88	99	99									
Planned learning completed	31		86	53	213	88	99	99									
Gained job	32		19	12	47	20	7	7									
Still in training	63		0	0	0	0	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

## Quality of education and training

47. Teaching standards on the foundation programmes are good. Of the teaching observed during the inspection 50 per cent was graded by inspectors as very good or good. There was no unsatisfactory teaching. Tutors use a good variety of teaching methods to develop language skills. They work effectively with support assistants to meet individual client's needs. There is a particularly good ratio of tutors to clients, allowing exceptional levels of support during the sessions. Clients are encouraged to help each other. All of the teachers either have, or are working towards, recognised teaching qualifications. They are sensitive to the personal, social and practical needs of individual clients and successfully create relaxed, enjoyable and challenging learning environments. In the best sessions, tutors create high-quality, colour handouts to illustrate their teaching and provide stimulating learning activities specifically to meet the needs of individual groups of clients. Tutors are fully aware of the different abilities of clients, and manage group and pair work activities effectively to ensure that all clients achieve the maximum benefit from them. Clients make exceptionally good progress in learning English language skills, especially since many have virtually no English language ability when they join the course. There are particularly good working relationships between tutors and clients. Clients are well motivated and clearly enjoy the teaching sessions.

48. Clients receive thorough and effective inductions into their programmes. All the programmes are well designed, with clear outcomes which are explained to the clients during induction. This process, which also covers equal opportunities and health and safety matters, is effectively supported by clear visual aids, simplified handouts and activities to reinforce learning. Information can be given to clients in their own first language. Induction packs have been translated into the most common languages



spoken in the local community. Exceptionally good use is made of translators. More than 30 languages are spoken among staff at 5E Ltd and clients are able to have a translator with them throughout the induction. Staff are careful to make sure that clients understand the structure of the programme and are clear about their rights and responsibilities. Clients are allocated a group tutor according to the results of the initial assessment of their literacy ability. The tutors have access to all the records of clients' formal and informal assessments, and background information to help design an appropriate learning programme for each individual client.

49. Learning plans and progress reviews are used effectively to monitor clients' progress. All clients have individually planned learning programmes to suit their needs. The individual learning plan process includes pictures which illustrate the learning target. Clients have individual interviews with skilled staff to agree their personal targets. These targets not only cover the development of language skills but also include personal and learning skills. The individual learning plans are regularly checked and updated by means of detailed four-weekly progress reviews. Client's attendance is monitored closely, to identify potential problems at an early stage. In the progress reviews, clients are assessed and there are constructive discussions as to how they might improve their progress. Targets are reviewed and updated. Any personal concerns are also discussed and realistic strategies developed to resolve these.

50. The development of language skills is helped by very good use of ICT and jobsearch facilities. ESOL and basic skills website resources and CD-ROMs are used to support and reinforce learning. Tutors take opportunities to further develop vocabulary and language patterns during jobsearch activities or ICT training sessions. Outings to local libraries, cinemas and museums provide additional contexts in which to develop language skills. Jobsearch is carried out effectively and 5E Ltd has a website which advertises vacancies identified in local papers. Pen pictures of clients are also displayed with reference numbers, so that local employers can contact 5E Ltd and request more information about potential employees.

51. There is particularly good support for learners. They are provided with files, textbooks and workbooks to support their programmes of study. Staff readily provide individual tuition for learners after classes, or on additional days, including Saturdays, to help clients to make faster progress, or to resolve problems. There is a strong emphasis on developing the skills needed to find and keep employment. Working relationships between clients and staff are exceptionally good. Staff help with personal and domestic issues, including translating official documents, making telephone calls on the client's behalf and helping clients to get job interviews. For example, a staff member contacted local housing agencies to find accommodation for a homeless client. There are also good, free crèche facilities for learners.

52. In some teaching sessions there is an over reliance on the use of textbooks, even though good-quality teaching resources are available at the training centre. Sometimes poor-quality handouts are used, which are difficult for the clients to use with confidence.

53. The ESOL tutors meet regularly to discuss curriculum issues and develop programmes to meet the needs of clients. Individual client's needs are discussed and strategies developed to improve performance. Targets are set for achievement and retention and monitored weekly. The recruitment of new clients is effectively managed so that classes are full and resources are used effectively. All schemes of work have now been matched with the new national ESOL core curriculum for adults. Staff are encouraged to take advantage of staff development opportunities to update their knowledge. New staff shadow experienced tutors to gain experience in the procedures and approaches used to support clients. All staff teaching on the ESOL programmes receive training in basic ICT so that they can also help clients to develop ICT skills for jobsearch. There is particularly strong promotion of equal opportunities and staff encourage clients to share their own cultural values and beliefs during teaching sessions. Clients from widely differing cultures and religious beliefs actively support each other's development of language skills.