

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **Broadland Council Training Services**

**17 March 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 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
- **learnirect** 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

In those cases 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.



## SUMMARY

### The provider

Broadland Council Training Services is part of Broadland District Council's business development unit in Norwich. It has contracts with Norfolk Learning and Skills Council to provide work-based learning for young people and the Learning Gateway, and also has a contract with Jobcentre Plus to provide Life Skills and foundation programmes. It provides training in land-based, retailing, business administration, and foundation programmes.

### Overall judgement

The quality of the provision is adequate to meet the reasonable needs of those receiving it. More specifically, Broadland Council Training Service's training in the areas of land-based and foundation is good. Business administration training is satisfactory and its leadership and management are good. The arrangements for quality assurance are satisfactory and those for equality of opportunity are good.

### GRADES

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

<b>Land-based provision</b>	<b>2</b>
Contributory grades:	
Work-based learning for young people	2

<b>Business administration, management &amp; professional</b>	<b>3</b>
Contributory grades:	
Work-based learning for young people	3

<b>Foundation programmes</b>	<b>2</b>
Contributory grades:	
New Deal 18-24	2
Life Skills	2

**KEY STRENGTHS**

- good staff development
- very good work placements
- good planning and co-ordination of training
- very good support for learners

**KEY WEAKNESSES**

- some poor progress and achievement
- insufficient use of target-setting

## THE INSPECTION

1. A team of five inspectors spent a total of 26 days at Broadland Council Training Services (BCTS) in March and April 2003. They interviewed 53 learners, studied 52 individual learning plans and 48 portfolios of evidence, visited 27 workplaces and interviewed 25 workplace supervisors. The inspectors held 35 interviews with providers' staff and observed and graded seven learning sessions. They examined a range of paperwork, including learners' files, business plans, achievement records, procedures and policies, and reports from external bodies. The inspectors studied BCTS most recent self-assessment report, which was produced in October 2002.

Grades awarded to learning sessions

	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Total
Land-based provision	0	0	2	4	1	0	0	7
<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>7</b>

## THE PROVIDER AS A WHOLE

### Context

2. BCTS is part of Broadland District Council's business development unit, which provides training for people in Norfolk to meet their personal needs and the needs of local businesses. BCTS has contracts with Norfolk Learning and Skills Council (LSC) and Jobcentre Plus to provide work-based learning for young people, the Learning Gateway, Life Skills, and the New Deal 18-24 voluntary sector option. It provides training in land-based, retailing, business administration, and foundation areas of learning. The retailing provision was not inspected due to the low number of learners on the training programme. BCTS has learners in work placements throughout Norfolk, in rural and city locations. BCTS also provides some commercial training, primarily in information technology (IT) and business subjects, and is a subcontractor for other training providers.

3. In March 2003, the unemployment rate in Norfolk was 2.3 per cent, compared with the national average of 2.7 per cent. In 2001, the percentage of school leavers who obtained five or more general certificates of secondary education (GCSEs) at grade C or above was 50 per cent, compared with 47.9 per cent nationally. The percentage of people from minority ethnic groups was 0.9 per cent, compared with 6.2 per cent nationally.

### Work-based learning for young people

4. The training in land-based and business administration training programmes is good. Training is well planned and co-ordinated, and learners receive very good support. Work placements are very good. There is some poor progress and achievement, and insufficient target-setting.

### New Deal 18-24

5. The training in foundation programmes is good. There is good achievement, very good individual support for clients, and effective work placements. There is some poor accommodation and limited access to IT resources at some training centres.

### Life Skills

6. The training in foundation programmes is good. There is good achievement, very good individual support for clients, and effective work placements. There is some poor accommodation and limited access to IT resources at some training centres.



## LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

## Grade 2

7. BCTS is part of Broadland District Council's business development unit. The head of business development is responsible for all aspects of the organisation, including equal opportunities and quality assurance. Four managers report directly to the head of business development, two of whom are part of the business development function only and the other two are the learning and development manager, who is responsible for the provision of training, and the foundation programme manager. The training unit has 37 staff, and most of the management and administrative staff work full time. Many of the assessors are self-employed and work part time. Accountancy training is subcontracted to another training provider. Broadland District Council (the council) has an equal opportunities policy that covers all aspects of the provision. All staff are reviewed as part of the council's personal development and appraisal scheme. Self-assessment and action-planning are routine features of the unit's arrangements for quality assurance. The organisation's most recent self-assessment report was produced in October 2002.

### STRENGTHS

- good strategic planning
- good staff development
- good informal communication
- effective and positive promotion of equality of opportunity
- effective action to deal with equality of opportunity problems
- fully inclusive self-assessment process

### WEAKNESSES

- inadequate monitoring of subcontracted training

### OTHER IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

- better use of data to monitor learners' progress
- better communication between departments
- better clarification of quality assurance procedures
- better evaluation of feedback

8. There is good strategic planning within the organisation, which focuses on developing the learners to their benefit and that of local businesses. This is derived from the council's strategy for increasing participation in training. All of BCTS's staff have access to this strategy through documents, a clear induction, and regular briefings. Staff have a clear understanding of the aims of the council and their roles in achieving them. Targets are set annually for increasing participation and for improving retention and

achievement rates. BCTS does not usually include these targets in staff appraisals, but it does monitor them and takes appropriate action. For example, appointing a new business administration assessor. Some of BCTS's management team have been involved effectively in the development of these targets. The council is committed to training that benefits the learners and local businesses, such as initiatives to get women back into the workforce and provide employment and training in the rural community. Staff ensure the council's aims are fulfilled by aligning training and experience with local needs, which improves the learners' employability.

9. BCTS encourages its staff to develop personally and professionally. The organisation sets targets for its staff at their appraisals, and these are reviewed regularly. Regardless of their job role, all staff have equal access to training, which BCTS provides free of charge, either in-house or through an external training provider. Staff have gained a variety of qualifications relevant to their job roles and BCTS has identified their potential and developed many of them into effective tutors, and in one case, a manager. As soon as they are appointed, BCTS encourages new staff to gain qualifications. For example, one assessor achieved the assessors' qualifications within three months of starting.

10. There is good informal communication between all parties involved in the training process. Communication between staff and the management team is effective, and staff are comfortable talking to them. Assessors speak regularly with employers to discuss learners' progress and problems are resolved quickly and effectively. For example, BCTS resolved a problem on the accountancy programme by arranging a training day for all of the learners and replacing ineffective formal assessors' meetings with informal meetings within the areas of learning. While communication is particularly good within the areas of learning and between management and staff, communication between the areas of learning is not as effective. BCTS identified this in its most recent self-assessment report and is taking steps to improve the situation, although it is too early to judge their effectiveness.

11. BCTS uses its management information system effectively to monitor its performance against the contract with the LSC. While it has the facility to monitor learners' progress during their training programme, this aspect is not fully utilised.

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

12. BCTS has a detailed equality of opportunity policy. There is a clear statement of equality of opportunity issues and how they apply to each aspect of the provision, and these are detailed and comprehensive statements on how to avoid indirect discrimination. Equality of opportunity issues are discussed at every staff meeting and there is also an effective, formal equality of opportunity planning group, which meets regularly. There are clear procedures for dealing with harassment and complaints.

13. BCTS takes effective and positive action to promote equality of opportunity. There is good recording and analysis of equality of opportunity data to help develop the provision. For example, BCTS is taking action to improve the representation of men in areas traditionally dominated by women, such as the equine provision. There is effective action to break down other barriers to learning, such as the problem of needing experience to gain an equine work placement, in order to gain experience. BCTS works effectively with employers to place learners with no previous equine experience. BCTS takes positive and effective action to involve learners from remote locations. BCTS has just established a learners' council, to give learners the opportunity to contribute to the management of the provision.

14. There is effective involvement with other agencies. BCTS is an active member of a range of groups involved in promoting equality of opportunity. This has positive benefits for the learners. For example, in order to further investigate equality of opportunity issues, BCTS wrote to all of the schools in Norfolk to identify the representation of minority ethnic groups. The organisation analysed the results for trends to help develop the provision.

15. BCTS provides its staff with effective equality of opportunity training and regular weekly updates at the staff briefing sessions. Staff also attend other training and workshops. For example, several staff have been on deaf awareness training and one has had training in sign language. Other staff have been on equality of opportunity legislation training. The staff have a rich variety of equality of opportunity knowledge, which is shared effectively between them and passed on to the learners. BCTS provides facilities to remove barriers to learning, such as a mobile induction loop system, and wheelchair access to their training building. BCTS has facilities for learners in wheelchairs and can provide all training on the ground floor if required. BCTS uses available funds effectively to provide personal coaches for learners with additional needs.

16. BCTS provides learners with effective equality of opportunity training, including workshops, mentoring, and individual coaching. All learners have at least a satisfactory understanding of equality of opportunity, which they discuss at each review. In some cases, learners prefer to use their BCTS tutor as the first point of contact, instead of their workplace supervisor. There are plans to improve the provision of equality of opportunity training by providing it to learners in remote locations at their workplace, and BCTS is developing the relevant learning materials.

## BROADLAND COUNCIL TRAINING SERVICES

17. BCTS deals with equality of opportunity problems quickly, sensitively, and effectively, and records incidents thoroughly and confidentially. Staff and learners report excellent support from the organisation during difficult personal periods. In one recent example, where the learner was completely disengaged, BCTS took effective and sensitive action to fully investigate the complaint and re-motivate the learner. There is a formal complaints procedure that is clear and well documented. BCTS's staff use their knowledge and experience effectively to provide good support for equality of opportunity issues.

**Quality assurance****Contributory grade 3**

18. BCTS has a very thorough quality assurance system that conforms to ISO9001:2000, which is an international quality assurance standard. The organisation keeps a paper copy at the training centre and on its intranet, and has plans to issue all staff with a copy on CD-ROM so that they can access it remotely. The quality assurance manual is divided into five sections, relating to the management of the training centre, the management of training and pre-, on- and post-programme procedures. Documents are referenced clearly and all of them have a unique number and the date of the last revision. The quality assurance manager audits the quality assurance manual according to an annual audit plan. Staff can also add and amend documents throughout the year. The quality assurance manual is comprehensive and staff understand the procedures, but some find it difficult to navigate and the document is not structured clearly.

19. The self-assessment process involved all of BCTS's staff, who attended a training day and discussed the completion of the self-assessment report in detail. Each team then completed a self-assessment of their own area. The learning and development manager co-ordinated the production of the final report, which used information contained in the regular feedback obtained from the learners and employers. BCTS invited subcontractors to participate in the self-assessment process, but they were unable to attend the training day. However, the information contained in their own self-assessment reports has been included in BCTS's report. The self-assessment report identifies most of the organisation's strengths and many of its weaknesses.

20. The monitoring of subcontractors is inadequate. BCTS works with two subcontractors and, although it has an effective and comprehensive agreement with them, only one subcontractor has a copy. The agreement clearly sets out a quality assurance monitoring procedure that BCTS should apply to ensure the quality of the training. In 1999, BCTS produced one quality assurance monitoring report for one of the subcontractors but none has been completed since. BCTS recognised this weakness and has begun to rectify the problem but no formal monitoring has taken place.

21. BCTS collects feedback from the learners at the beginning of their training programmes, approximately half-way through, and at the end. BCTS consults staff and employers annually. The quality assurance manager examines all returned questionnaires and resolves any specific problems immediately. BCTS analyses the results every three months but does not use them for strategic analysis, to determine if there are patterns relating to individual training programmes or areas of learning.

## AREAS OF LEARNING

### Land-based provision

### Grade 2

Programmes inspected	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Work-based learning for young people	25	2

22. There are 24 modern apprentices working towards national vocational qualifications (NVQs) at levels 2 and 3 in horse care and one learner on another work-based learning programme. There are 10 advanced modern apprentices and 14 foundation modern apprentices. Most training and assessment takes place in the workplace, although learners can also attend the training centre for key skills workshops. BCTS has 29 work placements throughout Norfolk, all of which are approved for NVQ assessment. There are five work-based assessors and eight visiting assessors, three of whom are also internal verifiers. Most learners are employed and are recruited either directly from employers, Connexions or through BCTS's own marketing activities. Induction is carried out in the workplace. There is a basic skills tutor who supports learners with additional learning needs. Key skills are assessed by means of projects directly related to the equine industry. The assessors visit learners weekly to carry out training and assessment. The lead internal verifier carries out progress reviews with the learners every three months.

The following tables show the achievement and retention rates available up to the time of the inspection.

Work-based learning for young people																
Advanced modern apprenticeships (AMA)																
	2002-03		2001-02		2000-01		1999-2000									
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number of starts	2		4		10		2									
Retained*	0		0		4	40	2	100								
Successfully completed	0		0		1	10	0	100								
Still in learning	2		4		3	30	1	50								

\*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

Work-based learning for young people																
Foundation modern apprenticeships (FMA)																
	2002-03		2001-02		2000-01		1999-2000									
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number of starts	10		14		12		1									
Retained*	0		5		6	50	1	100								
Successfully completed	0		2		4	33	0	0								
Still in learning	9		4		1	8	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

Work-based learning for young people																
NVQ Training																
	2002-03															
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number of starts	1															
Retained*	0															
Successfully completed	0															
Still in learning	1															

\*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

## STRENGTHS

- good work placements
- well-planned and co-ordinated on- and off-the-job training
- very good training and pastoral support for learners
- particularly effective development of learners' key skills
- very good basic skills support

## WEAKNESSES

- poor achievement of modern apprenticeships
- insufficient use of target-setting

## OTHER IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

- better sharing of good practice

23. The work placements are good. Learners work in a variety of yards, including competition yards, livery yards, private yards, thoroughbred studs, riding schools, a riding centre for disabled people, and a large horse charity yard. BCTS approves all of the yards and all of them have good standards of stable management. BCTS matches the learners carefully and effectively to yards which suit their career aspirations and the level of NVQ that they are working towards. Learners can attend work placements for trial periods before deciding where to train. The good range of work placements ensures that learners have access to a wide range of work activities. BCTS checks all of the yards to ensure that they have the appropriate resources to meet the requirements of the NVQ. However, if a yard cannot provide an activity, BCTS makes effective arrangements for learners to visit other local yards so that they can achieve all aspects of their NVQ. Employers help learners with their practical training and many of them give their learners opportunities to go to events and competitions as grooms and sometimes as riders. BCTS has a good working relationship with work placements, and communication between them is excellent. Employers are provided with a handbook and greatly appreciate the help and support they receive from BCTS, which includes help with writing health and safety policies and contracts of employment.

24. Training is well planned and there is good co-ordination of on- and off-the-job training. Assessors visit the learners each week to train and assess them and, at the end of each visit, the assessors plan the next week's training and set tasks for the learners to complete. The assessors and the learners keep comprehensive records of all training completed. BCTS provides all of the assessors with detailed and well-written lesson plans covering all of the background knowledge work for NVQs at levels 2 and 3. Assessors ensure that the workplace supervisors are aware of the training plan for the following week, so that they can co-ordinate the on-the-job training. All of the work placements provide the learners with on-the-job training. The internal verifier checks the training records during quarterly progress reviews.

25. There is very good training and pastoral support for learners, all of whom have excellent working relationships with the assessors. The lead internal verifier carries out detailed and comprehensive quarterly reviews. Great care is taken to ensure that learners are making good progress and receiving adequate and appropriate training. BCTS encourages the learners to identify their own training needs and take responsibility for their own development. The lead internal verifier ensures that there is good communication between the learner, the assessor, and the workplace supervisor. Any problems are discussed sensitively and learners are given sensible strategies to help them to improve their performance. If learners experience problems in a work placement, BCTS will find an alternative work placement if it cannot resolve the problem. BCTS offers all learners a mentor to help them with any personal problems



and, if necessary, refers them to the appropriate external agency. BCTS also participates in a pilot project funded by Norfolk LSC, which provides trained personal learning coaches to provide confidential help and guidance to learners with specific problems related to the achievement of their NVQ. For example, a learning coach helped a learner to become less anxious about attending the external key skills tests and accompanied the learner to the test centre.

26. There is particularly effective development of learners' key skills. BCTS uses key skills diagnostic tests to identify any gaps in the learners' knowledge. All assessors are working towards key skills qualifications and there are also two qualified key skills practitioners, who offer learners extra support to help them to develop their key skills. Learners can also attend key skills workshops at the training centre. Assessors have laptop computers, which they use effectively to help learners develop their IT skills. BCTS encourages all learners to work towards a higher level of key skills than that required by the modern apprenticeship framework. The learners produce well-written and interesting projects, which they use as evidence for their NVQ and key skills portfolios. Learners are enthusiastic about the projects, as they are relevant to their work and involve collecting data and information from their work placement. BCTS uses mock key skills tests to ensure that learners are confident before they sit the external tests, and 81 per cent of the current learners who have taken the tests have passed them. BCTS encourages the learners to try to complete their key skills during the first three months of their modern apprenticeship.

27. There is very good support for learners with basic skills needs. Additional learning needs are identified through initial assessment. A qualified basic skills tutor visits learners weekly, who have additional learning needs. The tutor works effectively and sensitively with learners to plan and give suitable training. The training is provided in the context of the equine industry and involves both portfolio work and reading, writing, and number use exercises. Learners greatly appreciate this support and it improves their ability to achieve their qualification. Employers are involved in this training and are given strategies to help learners to improve their levels of literacy. BCTS provides dyslexic learners with specialist help to develop their writing skills and disposable cameras and dictaphones to reduce the amount of written work required to achieve their NVQ.

28. Internal verification is satisfactory and carried out to awarding-body standards. It includes observations of assessors' performance and both interim and final verification of portfolios. Learners have a good understanding of the meaning and purpose of internal verification. Assessors meet twice yearly to share good practice and set standards. New initiatives to improve the quality of training are introduced frequently. However, assessors do not record assessment and progress effectively. For example, a new record of achievement has been introduced, which shows how much of their qualification learners have achieved, but many assessors do not give learners copies of this document. Some assessors complete detailed records of assessment, while others record assessment less well. All assessors also provide training but some are less experienced in teaching, while others have developed effective strategies to give

stimulating and challenging training. This good practice is not always shared effectively.

29. There is poor achievement for learners on modern apprenticeships. Of the 27 learners who started foundation modern apprenticeships between 1999 and 2002, only 33 per cent achieved the qualification. Of the 12 learners who started advanced modern apprenticeships between 1999 and 2001, only 42 per cent achieved the qualification. Achievement rates for foundation modern apprentices appear to be declining but the small numbers make it difficult to interpret the data. Learners are making at least satisfactory progress and some are due to achieve their modern apprenticeship ahead of their target date. The retention rate has improved and 100 per cent of advanced modern apprentices recruited between 2001-03 and 92 per cent of foundation modern apprentices recruited in 2002-03 are still in learning.

30. There is insufficient use of target-setting. Most learners are not aware of the target date for completion of their qualification or their progress towards achievement. Most learners do not know if they are on target to achieve their modern apprenticeship. No targets are set for the achievement of individual units or parts of units. Although assessors plan training carefully, assessments are less well planned and many learners do not know the dates of their next assessment. The work set at each assessment visit is not linked to a plan for the achievement of units or elements of units over time.

#### Good Practice

*One learner with dyslexia was having difficulty reading the horses' names displayed in the tack room, which made it difficult to select the correct tack. BCTS introduced a system of colour coding to ensure that the correct equipment was matched to each horse.*

**Business administration, management & professional****Grade 3**

Programmes inspected	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Work-based learning for young people	70	3

31. BCTS has 44 advanced and 25 foundation modern apprentices working towards administration and accounting qualifications, and one learner working towards an NVQ at level 1 in business administration. All learners are employed by companies in towns in Norfolk. BCTS recruits learners directly, or they are referred by employers. Initial assessment is by interview, which takes into account the learners' previous learning and work experience. A few learners carry out tests for literacy and/or numeracy skills. BCTS provides an induction for all learners and employers provide a further induction in the workplace. Learners in accounting have an induction at the subcontractors' premises. Learners in administration attend off-the-job training sessions at BCTS's premises for one day each week. Learners in accounting attend off-the-job training at a subcontractor on block release. Key skills training for learners in administration takes place at the weekly sessions. Few learners in accounting need to complete key skills, and these receive support from BCTS's tutors in the workplace. BCTS's assessors carry out assessment and internal verification for all aspects of the administration training programmes. The subcontractor carries out all assessment and internal verification for learners in accounting.

The following tables show the achievement and retention rates available up to the time of the inspection.

Work-based learning for young people																
Advanced modern apprenticeships (AMA)																
	2002-03		2001-02		2000-01		1999-2000									
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number of starts	17		29		25		30									
Retained*	0		0		17	68	23	77								
Successfully completed	0		0		5	20	20	67								
Still in learning	17		14		11	44	2	7								

\*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

## BROADLAND COUNCIL TRAINING SERVICES

Work-based learning for young people																
Foundation modern apprenticeships (FMA)																
	2002-03		2001-02		2000-01		1999-2000									
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number of starts	17		22		8		8									
Retained*	0		11		4	50	7	88								
Successfully completed	0		3		1	12	6	75								
Still in learning	16		7		2	25	0	100								

\*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

Work-based learning for young people																
NVQ Training																
	2002-03															
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number of starts	1															
Retained*	0															
Successfully completed	0															
Still in learning	1															

\*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

## STRENGTHS

- thorough co-ordination of training
- good training for learners in accounting
- good work placements
- extensive support for learners

## WEAKNESSES

- poor achievement on foundation modern apprenticeship programmes
- slow progress by some administration learners
- poor short-term target-setting

## **OTHER IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

- better development and monitoring of evidence for learners in administration

32. The co-ordination of training is thorough and focuses on the learners. At the beginning of the training programme, BCTS, the employers, and the learners carefully plan optional training and additional qualifications to meet the learners' aspirations and job roles. BCTS offers a wide range of additional short courses that develop learners' skills further and add value to the learners' training programmes. On-the-job training is enhanced through short courses in job-related topics and personal skills. These courses are integrated effectively into the learners' individual learning programme. Most learners in accounting do not do key skills training due to prior accreditation of learning. Where key skills training is required as part of the modern apprenticeship it is introduced early but not integrated with the NVQ evidence. BCTS recognises this and has plans to integrate the key skills evidence gathering with the NVQ.

33. The training in accounting is good. The external accounting qualification is well planned by the subcontractor and clearly communicated. The provision of the training is effective, with well-qualified staff teaching specialist units. Tutors are available through e-mail for support and guidance between learning sessions. Assessments are carried out throughout the training period and unit achievement is reported regularly to the awarding body. Assessment results are reported simultaneously to the learners and their employers. Learners can relate most aspects of the theory to their work roles and this is reinforced by good work-based portfolios of evidence. Learners' satisfaction with the training course and the subcontractor is very high. There is good progression from foundation to advanced modern apprenticeships and some learners go on to achieve external qualifications at a higher level than that required during their advanced modern apprenticeship. For example, some learners in accounting progress to studying for chartered status on completion of their advanced modern apprenticeship.

34. BCTS provides good work placements. Learners are employed in a wide variety of job roles, which are directly relevant to their modern apprenticeship. BCTS works effectively with employers to enhance these roles through project work and extra tasks to widen learners' experiences. Most employers give learners extra time to complete portfolio work in the workplace. Some employers provide learners with mentors who have completed similar modern apprenticeships, offering them explicit support through relating classroom theory to business practice. Another employer provided a laptop for the sole use of the learner at home to support skills development and improve the learners' portfolios of evidence. Learners value their jobs and recognise their improved confidence, personal growth, and the independent working skills that they have developed. Employers are involved fully and effectively in planning progress with BCTS and the learners.

35. Support for learners is thorough and extensive. BCTS's tutors develop good

working relationships with the learners, who find them approachable and responsive and value the high level of support that they receive. Learners and employers appreciate BCTS's speedy and effective resolution of problems and its continued monitoring afterwards. BCTS deals positively with complaints, and finds solutions that keep learners in training. BCTS has secured funding for a short-term personal coaching scheme, which provides intensive individual support for learners who are at risk of not completing their training.

36. Initial assessment is satisfactory. BCTS uses an interview process to assess learners' career aspirations, previous learning, and work experience. Basic skills assessment is not normally necessary, given the profile of prior learning. Most learners join their training programmes with four GCSEs at grade C or above, and some of them have general certificates of education at advanced level (A levels).

37. The training in administration is satisfactory. The quality of learners' portfolio work is satisfactory, with some examples of good work. Learners in administration produce separate evidence for each part of the qualification, and assessors' feedback is broken down further. Learners in administration do not regularly update their qualification monitoring records in their portfolios, and do not recognise links between different parts of their qualifications. Resources are satisfactory to meet the learners' needs. Access to IT resources is limited at the subcontractor's site, but learners have access to IT in the workplace and do not report difficulties with this arrangement. The administration training room at BCTS is adequate for the small group sizes that attend training sessions. The IT equipment and software are sufficient to meet the needs of the training. Retention and achievement are satisfactory, although there is a downward trend.

38. There is poor achievement on the foundation modern apprenticeship programmes. Achievement for 1999-2000 was 75 per cent, but for learners who started in the following year it is currently 12.5 per cent, with a maximum possible figure of 37.5 per cent. For learners starting in 2001-02, the current achievement rate is 28 per cent, with a maximum possible figure of 45 per cent. Of the 17 learners who started the current year, only one has left the training programme.

39. Some learners in administration have made slow progress. These learners had a poor understanding of how to collect evidence to meet the requirements of the NVQ and spent too much time writing long personal reports. There was ineffective support from their assessor and no claims were made to the awarding body for unit certification. Feedback to learners was brief and did not help them to progress. BCTS recognises this weakness and continues to work with learners who have passed their end of funding date. BCTS has also appointed a new assessor, who is concentrating on regaining the confidence of these learners and re-motivating them through intensive analysis of their portfolios of evidence and giving them very clear and detailed feedback. These learners report positive working relationships with the new assessor but it is too early to evaluate the impact on the learners' progress.

40. There is poor, short-term target-setting for learners. Targets are set at quarterly

reviews and are largely descriptive, without focusing on progressing the learner through the qualification. For learners in administration, few definite dates are set for work to be assessed. For learners in accounting, one date is set for portfolio completion, with no short-term targets for each unit. Targets are discussed at quarterly reviews and brought forward if required. Target-setting does not provide effective motivation for the learners.

**Poor Practice**

*A learner had a basic skills assessment for literacy three months ago, which identified that the learner needed support. The employer also recognised this and discussed it at the first quarterly review. However, BCTS has not provided explicit support for the learner in the three months since the basic skills assessment.*

**Foundation programmes****Grade 2**

Programmes inspected	Number of learners	Contributory grade
New Deal 18-24	15	2
Life Skills	12	2

41. BCTS's foundation programmes include the Learning Gateway and Life Skills, which are funded by the LSC, and the New Deal voluntary sector option, which is incorporated within the Prince's Trust Volunteer programme. A pilot Prince's Trust Volunteer programme offers similar personal development within performing arts and has been developed and funded by Local Initiative Funds. There are 15 learners funded by Jobcentre Plus on the New Deal voluntary sector option, and 12 through the Learning Gateway. There is an IT-related area of provision, funded by the LSC Local Initiative Funds but, at the time of inspection, 30 learners had recently completed the programme and there were no further learners still in learning.

42. Most of the provision is based around the Prince's Trust Volunteer programme, which is a 13-week personal development programme that includes teamwork, a residential course, a community project created and managed by the clients, work tasters, preparation for progression to further education or employment, and presentation skills. Clients are organised into discrete teams that also include employed volunteers who are released by their employers to attend part time. Many clients continue to carry out a further 13-week work placement. The course is offered at Norwich, Great Yarmouth, and King's Lynn, where it is subcontracted to the Fire Service.

43. There is a dedicated manager for foundation programmes, who co-ordinates the team of four Prince's Trust Volunteers' team leaders, a support worker and basic skills tutor. In addition, there is a work-placement co-ordinator, and four part-time support staff, plus various hourly paid staff. BCTS is responsible for the recruitment of clients following the Prince's Trust voluntary option and the employment, supervision and support of team and assistant leaders, including the workplace elements of the projects.



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

Work-based learning for young people																
Life Skills																
	2002-03		2001-02		2000-01											
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number of starts	26		28		10											
Retained*	7		19	68	7	70										
Successfully completed	7		19	68	7	70										
Still in learning	12		0	100	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

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

New Deal 18-24											
New Deal 18-24											
	2002-03		2001-02		2000-01		1999-2000		1998-99		
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
Number of starts	30		19								
Retained*	13	43	16	84							
Planned learning completed	13	43	16	84							
Gained job	6	40	3	16							
Still in training	15	50	0	0							

\*retained clients are those who have stayed in learning for at least the planned duration of their programme, or have successfully completed their programme within the time allowed, or who have gained employment during their time on the programme

## STRENGTHS

- good achievement of skills
- very good individual support
- very good work placements

## **WEAKNESSES**

- poor job outcomes for New Deal clients
- some poor accommodation
- limited access to IT resources at some centres

## **OTHER IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

- better integration of basic skills

44. There is good achievement of skills. Clients gain specific skills in IT, improve their literacy and numeracy skills effectively, and develop their self-confidence and social skills. The learning is applied in a variety of practical ways. For example, joint planning and completion of a community project and a team magazine. Targets relating to individual areas for improvement are set and clients identify and recognise their progress. Clients value the positive benefits of improved social opportunities, less isolation, and the opportunity to develop new skills. The work tasters and placements build on achievement in a tangible way and improve employability skills, such as time-keeping, personal responsibility, and the ability to communicate and relate to others. All of the clients who complete the programme achieve all of their learning goals. Clients' portfolios are well organised. There is good progression for clients. In 2000-01, 70 per cent of Life Skills and New Deal clients progressed into employment or further education. The figure for 2001-02 is 72 per cent and, for those who have already completed this year, the figure is 80 per cent.

45. There is very good support for individual clients. Initial assessment is thorough and takes account of the clients' social situation and learning history. Many clients have particular support requirements and they are planned for in an unobtrusive and satisfactory manner. All clients have an effective individual learning plan and are assessed for basic skills needs. Learning is planned around individual preferences and learning styles. A one-week, team-building residential course is built into the Prince's Trust Volunteers' programme, which clients particularly value as an experience that enables them to develop effective teamworking skills and discover and develop other skills. BCTS has developed an effective mentoring system to give clients a dedicated individual relationship that will continue to support them beyond their learning programme and into further education, training or employment. An incentive scheme rewards clients for achieving targets agreed with their mentors.

46. BCTS provides additional support to meet particular needs. Staff create a relaxed working environment that supports learning and clients work in small groups and support each other. Staff provide clients in difficulty with exemplary support outside office hours and BCTS provides transport to enable clients in rural areas to participate.

The opportunities for personal and team development, including soft skills, enable the clients to accumulate evidence for their portfolios. Clients value their improved self-esteem and employment prospects, and have very good working relationships with their mentors and BCTS's staff. Monitoring of clients' progress is effective and takes place formally at least every four weeks and informally each week.

47. Work placements are very good. BCTS provides a wide range of work placements and every effort is made to match them to the clients' interests. Work placements are well planned, and BCTS carries out thorough pre-placement checks and preparation work with the employer to plan the clients' experience. Workplace inductions are comprehensive and cover health and safety and equality of opportunity. The clients are well supported by the employers and BCTS's staff visit them regularly to monitor progress. Problems are dealt with quickly, effectively, and tactfully.

48. Formal basic skills support is satisfactory and initial assessments effectively identify clients' needs, which are adequately met. Basic skills training is not integrated sufficiently with the programme. BCTS has recently introduced improvements in the organisation and provision of basic skills training, and has carried out staff training, but it is too early to judge the effectiveness of these new initiatives.

49. There are poor job outcomes for New Deal clients. In the first year of provision, only 16 per cent of clients found work. However, 12 out of the remaining 16 clients progressed into further education. For this year, 20 per cent of clients have found work but only half of the clients who started this year have completed their training programme.

50. There is some poor training accommodation. The provision is delivered in a variety of premises, including a converted garage, BCTS's main training centre in Norwich, and a small terraced house in Great Yarmouth. Some of this accommodation is cramped, with no natural light or ventilation. In some of the accommodation, there are limited facilities for private reviews and individual work, and some training is situated on industrial estates away from amenities, which restricts recreational activity.

51. Access to IT resources at some training centres is limited. Although clients at the Norwich training centre have sufficient computers, IT resources at the other two outreach centres are insufficient for the number of learners. BCTS is aware of this problem and is looking at potential improvements, such as making arrangements for clients to access other sites at specific times. However, this restricts the amount of time clients have access to these resources.