

# REINSPECTION REPORT

## **North Derbyshire Chamber of Commerce and Industry Reinspection**

**14 November 2003**



ADULT LEARNING  
INSPECTORATE

## Grading

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

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

Inspectors use a five-point scale to summarise their judgements about the quality of provision in occupational/curriculum areas. The same scale is used to describe the quality of leadership and management, which includes quality assurance and equality of opportunity. The descriptors for the five grades are:

- *grade 1 - outstanding*
- *grade 2 - good*
- *grade 3 - satisfactory*
- *grade 4 - unsatisfactory*
- *grade 5 - very weak.*

The two grading scales relate to each other as follows:

SEVEN-POINT SCALE	FIVE-POINT SCALE
grade 1	grade 1
grade 2	
grade 3	grade 2
grade 4	grade 3
grade 5	grade 4
grade 6	grade 5
grade 7	

## Adult Learning Inspectorate

The Adult Learning Inspectorate (ALI) was established under the provisions of the *Learning and Skills Act 2000* to bring the inspection of all aspects of adult learning and work-based 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
- the University for Industry's **learndirect** provision
- Adult and Community Learning
- learning and job preparation programmes funded by Jobcentre Plus
- education and training in prisons, at the invitation of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Prisons.

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

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## REINSPECTION REPORT

### DESCRIPTION OF THE PROVIDER

1. North Derbyshire Chamber of Commerce and Industry (NDCCI) is a company limited by guarantee. Its head office is in Chesterfield. It was established in 1899 and has provided government-funded training since 1983. Its training division now employs 58 full-time equivalent staff, and offers training in engineering, business administration, accounts, information and communications technology, retailing, customer service and transportation, hospitality, oral health care and Entry to Employment (E2E). Most learners are working towards national vocational qualifications (NVQs). NDCCI subcontracts with local colleges and training providers for the provision of background knowledge and/or assessment in some programme areas. NDCCI's training activities include E2E programmes for learners moving into employment or further training, work-based learning for young people through foundation and advanced modern apprenticeships, NVQs and short training programmes for adults. NDCCI offers training to people across Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire through contracts with the Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire Learning and Skills Councils. It also provides work-based learning for adults through contracts with Jobcentre Plus. There are 533 learners, of whom 94 are advanced modern apprentices, 159 are foundation modern apprentices, 115 are taking NVQs and 118 are participating in E2E. A further 47 are clients on work-based learning for adults programmes. In addition, there are 94 key stage 4 pupils who access a range of vocational programmes.

### SCOPE OF PROVISION

#### Retailing, customer service & transportation

2. There are 64 learners on retailing, customer service and transportation programmes. Twenty learners are foundation modern apprentices, eight are advanced modern apprentices and 36 are on NVQ programmes. There are 14 learners on retailing programmes, of whom 12 are foundation modern apprentices, one is an advanced modern apprentice and one is working towards an NVQ at level 1. There are 13 learners on distribution programmes, of whom four are foundation modern apprentices, four are working towards the NVQ at level 2 and five are working towards the NVQ at level 1. Seventeen learners are on customer service programmes, of whom four are foundation modern apprentices, seven are advanced modern apprentices, three are working towards the NVQ at level 2 and three towards NVQ at level 3. There are 19 learners on international trade and services programmes, 18 on NVQ at level 2 and one on NVQ at level 3. There is one learner on NVQ at level 2 call handling. There are also 10 adult learners who are following a wide range of short programmes. Most learners are employed in a broad range of employers and organisations which includes small privately owned businesses and large national companies. Learners work in doctors' surgeries, cash and carry warehouses, chambers of commerce and national retail outlets. Off-the-job training is provided for groups of learners at the training centre and individual coaching is available as required in the workplace. Assessment is carried out by assessors

## NORTH DERBYSHIRE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY REINSPECTION

who visit learners in their workplaces every two to four weeks to plan and carry out assessments. Reviews are carried out by monitoring officers who visit learners in their workplaces every six to eight weeks. There are three internal verifiers, of whom two are also assessors, and a monitoring officer.

### Health, social care & public services

3. NDCCI has 39 learners all working towards the NVQ level 3 in oral healthcare. All of these learners are employed and work full time in dental practices in Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire. A year ago a new subcontractor was engaged in order to resolve the weaknesses identified at the previous inspection. The subcontractor is responsible for the delivery of the background knowledge, assessment and internal verification. One tutor delivers all the background knowledge and two assessors are responsible for portfolio-building and the workplace observations. One internal verifier oversees their work. Learners attend off-the-job training for an afternoon every alternate week for the mandatory units, and then an evening a week for the optional units and portfolio-building or extra support. Assessment and portfolio-building take place in the workplace with assessors visiting learners frequently. Progress reviews are carried out in the workplace every eight weeks by NDCCI's staff. Learners are entered for the external independent assessment examination for dental nurses in either May or November and if they fail, in all or part of this, they are able to resit the required section at the next available session.

### ABOUT THE REINSPECTION

Number of inspectors	3
Number of inspection days	9
Number of learner interviews	26
Number of staff interviews	15
Number of employer interviews	11
Number of subcontractor interviews	3
Number of locations/sites/learning centres visited	14

### OVERALL JUDGEMENT

4. At the previous inspection in August 2002, retailing, customer service and distribution and oral health care were found to be unsatisfactory. On completion of the reinspection, both these areas were found to be satisfactory.

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### GRADES

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

	Inspection	Reinspection
<b>Retailing, customer service &amp; transportation</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>
Contributory grades:		
Work-based learning for young people	4	3

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

## AREAS OF LEARNING

### Retailing, customer service & transportation

Grade 3

Programmes inspected	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Work-based learning for young people	64	3

*During the reinspection process, the inspectors identified the following strengths and weaknesses:*

#### Strengths

- improving retention rates
- good support for learners
- good workplaces

#### Weaknesses

- some slow progress towards achievement

### Achievement and standards

5. Retention rates are improving. Of the learners who started in 2001-02, 45 per cent were retained and 66 per cent of learners who started in 2002-03 were retained. All the advanced modern apprentices who started in 2002-03 are still in learning and 86 per cent of learners who have started since August 2003 are still in learning. Achievement rates across all the programme areas in this area of learning are improving, although progress is slow in some cases.

6. Since the previous inspection, online testing has been introduced for key skills. The pass rate has improved from 55 per cent to 88 per cent. The results of online tests are available immediately and assessors are able to plan and provide targeted support to learners who do not pass the online tests. If necessary, learners can resit tests seven days after the previous test.

7. Learners make slow progress towards achievement. Two learners in customer service have been training for eight months and have not yet achieved an NVQ unit. Two other customer service learners have been training for 11 months and have only achieved three units. Some learners do not finish their programme within the target period, but they are supported by NDCCI assessors until they achieve. Since 2001, 84 of the 186 learners who started have left without achieving their qualification. Assessors assess holistically and most learners are working on all their NVQ units simultaneously. There is little focus on completing NVQ units early in the learners' programme.



## **Quality of education and training**

8. There are good workplaces. Learners develop good skills at work and make good progress. Many learners have been given increased responsibilities and carry out complex tasks, often without supervision. One advanced modern apprentice in retailing has responsibility for the management of a retail outlet in the manager's absence. In another workplace, a learner has been given the additional responsibility of dealing with export customers, an important part of the company's business.

9. Learners develop good personal skills. Many learners are given time during the working day to work on their portfolios. Their workplace supervisors encourage learners to gather product evidence and provide witness testimonies. Many of the employers have staff who have been on training programmes with NDCCI and have developed working relationships which ensure continuation of work placements and employment. The NDCCI newsletter often contains articles about the workplaces and celebrates the success of learners.

10. There is good support for learners. Monitoring officers and assessors make frequent visits to learners' workplaces, every two to three weeks. The monitoring officers visit at least every six weeks to carry out progress reviews. Learners value the contact by an additional person from NDCCI. Learners are able to request additional visits and NDCCI staff respond quickly. Assessors and monitoring officers are easily contactable by telephone. Since the previous inspection, additional workshops are offered to learners during the day and the evening, to meet the needs of learners. Learning sessions are well planned and build on learners' skills and knowledge. Attendance at the workshops is good and learners value them. The assessors and the monitoring officers have an excellent rapport with the learners and with their supervisors. There is a good understanding of the organisational constraints which affect attendance at workshops held during the working day. Since the previous inspection, NDCCI's staff have developed quick reference wallets which are given to learners and employers. These credit card-sized wallets contain concise information and advice on equal opportunities, rights and responsibilities and health and safety, together with the contact details for assessors and monitoring officers. Learners have a copy of their individual learning plan, which is updated at reviews. NVQ action plans are completed during each assessor visit and clear short-term targets are set. Since the previous inspection, key skills training has been introduced at the start of learners' programmes. Learners complete activities which are relevant to their job roles. Learners attend key skills workshops where they develop their skills and knowledge. Learners can now take key skills tests online on demand.

11. The induction process is satisfactory and takes place at NDCCI or in the workplace. Learners are introduced to their NVQ, types of evidence and portfolio-building. Learners are made aware of framework requirements, health and safety is discussed, as are equality of opportunity and diversity. Most learners have a good recall of their induction. Learners have an induction pack which includes the appeals procedure and complaints procedure.

12. The review process is satisfactory. Reviews are carried out every four to six weeks by the monitoring officer. Learners are encouraged to make comments about their progress. Most employers take an active part in the review and the learner and the employer has a copy of the review paperwork. Target-setting and action-planning take place each time the assessor visits the learner. Learners are set clear short-term targets, but these are often driven by the assessor. Learners have a clear understanding of what they need to achieve, and targets agreed at the previous review are examined and action against them is recorded. The individual learning plan is updated when necessary and medium-term and long-term targets are set and reviewed. Learners and employers have a good understanding of the review process. Employers are aware of the learners' progress towards the NVQ and key skills.

13. Initial assessment is satisfactory. Learners take tests in information technology, application of number and communication and are given the results, which are also recorded on the individual learning plan. Learners' prior achievements are recognised and exemptions are claimed where appropriate for key skills units and enhancement units. Previous relevant work experience is recorded. Recruitment officers check that each learner's job role fits the target qualification and assessors agree the optional and enhancement units with the learner. Since the previous inspection, recruitment officers contact the learners more frequently at the start of their programme.

14. Resources are satisfactory. Workshop sessions take place in bright training rooms, which are equipped with a television and video player, an overhead projector, a whiteboard and flip-charts. The rooms are comfortably furnished. Staff have relevant occupational experience and qualifications. The assessors and internal verifiers are also qualified. Assessors and internal verifiers have a programme of continuous professional development and have occupational updating on a regular basis to meet awarding body requirements.

15. Assessment practices are satisfactory. Assessors visit learners in the workplace every two to three weeks to carry out assessments. Assessors record in detail the activities observed and identify the performance criteria and range covered in the vocational units and key skills units. Assessors complete a recently developed NVQ action plan, which records the targets for the next assessment visit. Learners' portfolios contain a wide range of evidence and good use is made of work-based product evidence. Learners have a good understanding of how to cross-reference their evidence and best use is made of day-to-day evidence. Learners write detailed statements to support their product evidence. Assessors monitor achievement of NVQ elements and key skills units.

16. Internal verification is satisfactory and follows awarding body requirements. Portfolio verification takes place throughout the learners' programme. Sampling plans identify which learners' portfolios will be internally verified and when and ensures that all assessors and units are verified. Internal verification of observed assessments takes place on a regular basis and written feedback is recorded and given to the assessors. Action points are dealt with and assessment decisions are recorded.

17. There is good awareness of the qualification requirements by employers. Employers understand the requirements and components of the modern apprenticeship framework and plan learners' work activities to ensure that they are able to develop their skills and knowledge. Employers encourage learners to use products from work-based activities as evidence.

18. Numeracy and literacy support is satisfactory. Numeracy and literacy support needs are identified during the initial assessment. Two of the four assessors are experienced in, and have qualifications in, providing literacy and numeracy support. However, none of the learners currently receive numeracy or literacy support.

### **Leadership and management**

19. The leadership and management of customer service, retailing, call handling, warehousing and transportation programmes are satisfactory. The team of assessors and internal verifiers is led by a team leader. Frequent meetings are held, minutes are taken and action points are identified. One member of the team is on the quality assurance group and represents the rest of the team. Since the previous inspection, there has been much sharing of good practice and some new assessment and internal verification systems have been introduced. Changes have been made to the arrangements for key skills training, which is introduced at the start of the programme and assessments are carried out throughout. Learners are now able to take online external tests on demand.

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

Programmes inspected	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Work-based learning for young people	39	3

*During the reinspection process, the inspectors identified the following strengths and weaknesses:*

**Strengths**

- good standard of learners' work
- improving retention and achievement rates
- excellent support for learners

**Weaknesses**

- insufficiently clear targets for learners

**Achievement and standards**

20. Learners' work is of a good standard. Work in learners' portfolios is well presented. Since the previous inspection assessors are working closely with the learners and progress is being made towards achievement of units and the whole qualification. Learners report that before the engagement of the new subcontractor they did not understand how to build their portfolios. This has now been resolved and many learners are making rapid progress, and 13 learners have now achieved the NVQ. The fast-tracking of learners has resulted in the achievement rate rising from zero to 36 per cent in the first six months of the new subcontracting arrangements. Most of the remaining learners from the 2001-02 intake have nearly finished the qualification. Assessors are visiting learners as often as each week if needed in order to help them identify the necessary evidence and cross-reference it satisfactorily. Additional observations are planned and implemented when necessary. The tutor identifies possible knowledge evidence during the off-the-job training which also helps with evidence collection. The pass rate in the independent assessment is at, or above, the national average and has improved at each assessment. Retention rates are satisfactory and are continuing to improve, rising from 65 per cent in 2001-02 to 71 per cent in 2002-03. NDCCI is trying to improve this further by providing additional telephone support at the start of the learners' programmes. This has proved successful with 96 per cent of the current intake still in learning.

**Quality of education and training**

21. Learners receive regular eight-weekly visits by NDCCI's staff to monitor their progress. These reviews are very thorough and supportive and employers are actively involved. Learners' understanding of policy documents, health and safety and equality of

opportunity is thoroughly checked and any problems are discussed. Learners' progress towards achievement of their NVQ is monitored and problems are identified and dealt with. If learners need additional support, staff organise this for the learners. Learners are given a wallet which contains important information such as how to get help, the appeals procedure and grievance procedure. Employers' staff are given a similar wallet which contains employer-focused information including their responsibilities and health and safety advice. Learners have regular visits from assessors each week. During assessor visits learners have the portfolio requirements explained, assessments planned, regular observations of their workplace practice and are given detailed feedback. Learners value this support highly. When learners start their programme they have an induction which includes an initial assessment of their abilities and aptitude. Learners who are considered unlikely to achieve are guided to alternative programmes. Marketing materials are clearly laid out and include previous learners describing the requirements of the programme and the job new learners will be doing.

22. The training sessions are satisfactory. All learners are working towards the NVQ at level 3 as this is the only qualification that prepares them for working in the dental surgery. Learners who have already gained experience in the workplace are able to use their experience to gain evidence at an accelerated rate. Resources are satisfactory and specialist resources are obtained from the dental hospital for the off-the-job training. Learners have their own copies of the textbook and this they use to help them understand the background knowledge.

23. Learners are unable to achieve any of the mandatory units until they have completed the independent assessment. Unit achievement is not possible early in the programme. Individual learning plans identify the date of the independent assessment as the target date for unit completion. Assessment plans set detailed targets for achievement of specific aspects of the units, but there are no clear targets for whole units.

## **Leadership and management**

24. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The subcontractor was changed following issues identified at the previous inspection. NDCCI invited employers and workplace supervisors to a meeting to discuss the learning programme, and changes were made. These include learners being released from employment for an afternoon a week to attend classes, a new tutor being employed and new systems for assessment and portfolio-building. Learners report that the delivery of the off-the-job training is much improved and since the introduction of the new assessment practice, learners have started to achieve the qualification. Progress is monitored by a sound internal verification system. New communication systems have been developed which have improved the co-ordination of the on- and off-the-job training. Employers and workplace supervisors understand the qualification and learners benefit from their enthusiastic support.