

# REINSPECTION REPORT

## **North Humberside Motor Trades Group Training Association Reinspection**

04 December 2003



ADULT LEARNING  
INSPECTORATE

## NORTH HUMBERSIDE MOTOR TRADES GROUP TRAINING ASSOCIATION REINSPECTION

### 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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## **North Humberside Motor Trades Group Training Association Reinspection**

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## REINSPECTION REPORT

### DESCRIPTION OF THE PROVIDER

1. North Humberside Motor Trades Group Training Association (the association) was formed in 1972 in Kingston-upon-Hull by employers in the retail motor industry. It became a charity in 1990. It has 40 member companies that pay an annual subscription and have voting rights, and a further 80 associate member companies that use the association to help select, train and assess apprentices. The association offers foundation and advanced modern apprenticeships in motor vehicle engineering for light and heavy vehicles, vehicle body building and repair, business administration, retailing of vehicle parts, and customer service. Training is funded by the local Learning and Skills Council (LSC). Some background knowledge training and assessment is subcontracted to Humberside local training providers. The association has 11 full-time members of staff.

2. In August 2003, the percentage of people who were unemployed in Hull, was 5.6 per cent, the highest outside inner London. However, the proportion of people from minority ethnic groups in the areas served by the association is low, at 2.3 per cent in Hull and 1.2 per cent in the East Riding of Yorkshire, as compared with 9.1 per cent in England as a whole.

### SCOPE OF PROVISION

#### Engineering, technology & manufacturing

3. There are 141 learners on work-based learning programmes in motor vehicle engineering. All learners are employed. Sixty-three advanced modern apprentices, and 78 foundation modern apprentices are on programmes in light and heavy vehicle maintenance, and vehicle body repair and paint. Foundation modern apprenticeships usually take 21 months, and advanced modern apprenticeships 60 months. Learners are recruited through direct applications as a result of school visits and advertisements in the press and on GTA's website. Some are referred by Connexions or their employers. The association carries out an initial assessment to determine which programme learners are best suited to, and whether additional support is required. Following an induction, learners attend one of two local colleges of further education for one day a week, where they receive training towards the relevant technical certificate and background knowledge for their NVQ. Qualified assessors from the association carry out assessment and progress reviews every eight weeks in the workplace.

**Business administration, management & professional**

4. The association has 16 foundation and 12 advanced modern apprentices on business administration programmes. All learners are employed either at motor vehicle dealers or in the offices of associated organisations. The association recruits learners and conducts an initial assessment to determine their suitability and to identify any specific needs, but the employing company makes the final selection. Employers provide on-the-job experience and job-related training. Learners attend off-the-job training for one day each week. This is given at the association for administration topics, and at a specialist training organisation for key skills. Assessors visit learners at their employers' premises to conduct NVQ assessments, provide support and carry out progress reviews.

**Retailing, customer service & transportation**

5. There are 11 foundation, and five advanced modern apprentices following parts distribution qualifications. There are also five learners following the customer service qualification, of whom three are foundation and two are advanced modern apprentices. All learners are employed by local companies. Learners attend an induction for one and a half days at the association. They attend off-the-job training at a local college for one day a week, and receive on-the-job training from their employers. Assessors visit the workplace every eight weeks. All practical assessment is carried out in the workplace.

**ABOUT THE REINSPECTION**

Number of inspectors	5
Number of inspection days	19
Number of learner interviews	73
Number of staff interviews	25
Number of employer interviews	24
Number of subcontractor interviews	5
Number of locations/sites/learning centres visited	25
Number of visits	25

**OVERALL JUDGEMENT**

6. At the previous inspection, the association's leadership and management, including its arrangements for equality of opportunity and quality assurance, were very weak. Work based learning for young people was satisfactory in administration, but unsatisfactory in retailing and customer service, and in engineering. At the end of the reinspection process, business administration training was judged to be good, and all other aspects of the provision, were 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>Leadership and management</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>3</b>
Contributory grades:		
Equality of opportunity	5	3
Quality assurance	5	3

	Inspection	Reinspection
<b>Engineering, technology &amp; manufacturing</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>
Contributory grades:		
Work-based learning for young people	4	3

	Inspection	Reinspection
<b>Business administration, management &amp; professional</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>
Contributory grades:		
Work-based learning for young people	3	2

	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

### KEY FINDINGS

#### Achievement and standards

**7. Learners attain the good standards of work required by the motor industry.**

Many learners are trusted to carry out responsible work on modern vehicles or with customers. The association's learners achieve a high level of success in national competitions.

8. While retention and achievement rates have historically been poor, good action has been taken to improve them. The rate of learner's progress through their qualification aims is quickening. It is still too early to see significant improvement in formal achievement because of the duration of motor vehicle related training programmes. However, the retention rate has improved, and is now expected that learners will take 1.6 years to complete a level 2 NVQ, compared with 2.6 years at the time of the previous inspection.

9. **Learners achieve a wide range of additional qualifications**, including nationally recognised qualifications, and attend courses organised by motor manufacturers.

### Quality of education and training

Grades awarded to learning sessions at the original inspection

	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Total
Engineering, technology & manufacturing	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	2
Business administration, management & professional	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	2
Retailing, customer service & transportation	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>5</b>

10. At the time of reinspection, 100 per cent of learning sessions observed were judged to be good or better. **There are good training opportunities in the workplace.** Workplaces are well equipped and provide a wide range of training opportunities for learners. All learners are allocated a personal mentor from the employer's staff, who helps oversee their training.

11. Resources for off-the-job training are satisfactory and satisfy the requirements of the NVQ. However some vehicles used for motor vehicle off-the-job training do not reflect modern technology. On-the-job resources are good.

12. Assessment practices are effective. **Good use is made of diverse evidence collected from the workplace. Recording and monitoring of learners' progress is good.** Internal verification is now satisfactory. The quality of learners' portfolios is satisfactory in motor vehicle and parts retailing, and good in administration.

13. **Support for learners is satisfactory in motor vehicle training, good in business administration and excellent in parts retailing.** Visits to the workplace for assessments and progress reviews are frequent and well planned. At best they result in a detailed action plan of things to achieve before the next visit.

14. **The overall planning of the training and assessment process is inadequate.** Individual learning plans are not held by learners. They contain insufficient detail. Planning does not ensure effective links between subcontracted and on-the-job training.

### Leadership and management

15. **Arrangements for supporting learners' literacy and numeracy needs are insufficiently structured.** Initial assessment is not designed or used to identify learners' support needs. The standard of learners' literacy and numeracy is generally high, but staff are insufficiently aware of how to identify and meet learners' needs.

16. Satisfactory progress has been made in improving equality of opportunity. Policies have been rewritten, and there is now a section on equality of opportunity in the



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business plan. There is improved monitoring of equality of opportunity on employers' premises. Publicity materials have been revised to include appropriate images.

**17. Learners have a good understanding of equality of opportunity.** Good staff and learner training in equality of opportunity has been introduced.

**18. Improved use is now made of data on equality of opportunity.** The collection and use of data on the retention and achievement rates of different learner groups is still not given sufficient priority in the ongoing meetings and work of the association.

19. The quality assurance processes have been revised extensively. There is now a new quality assurance manual and planner. Actions identified from previous inspections and self-assessment have been systematically implemented and plans put in place to bring about improvement. However, some of these processes are not yet sufficiently established to secure sustainable improvements to the provision.

20. Satisfactory use is now made of feedback from learners and employers. Where shortcomings have been identified, action has been taken to improve the provision.

21. The self-assessment process has involved most staff, and reflected the structure of the common inspection framework. Inspectors found the self-assessment report to be accurate although rather descriptive in style. The grades given by inspectors matched those in the report.

22. Monitoring of subcontracted provision is now satisfactory, with improvements made to communications, internal verification, and standardisation meetings. However, there is still insufficient communication to provide good links between on- and off-the-job training.

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

### **Leadership and management**

#### **Strengths**

- particularly good partnership work with employers
- open management approach to identifying problems and improving provision
- good focus on attainment of industrial standards
- good understanding of equality of opportunity by learners

#### **Weaknesses**

- some improvements to provision not fully established
- weak arrangements for referral to alternative provision
- insufficiently structured arrangements for supporting learners' literacy and numeracy needs

## **Engineering, technology & manufacturing**

### **Strengths**

- wide range of additional qualifications achieved
- good training opportunities in the workplace to enhance learners' skills
- effective assessment practices

### **Weaknesses**

- some slow progress towards completion of modern apprenticeship frameworks
- insufficient integration of on- and off-the-job training
- ineffective use of individual learning plans

## **Business administration, management & professional**

### **Strengths**

- good training which meets the industry's requirements
- good NVQ portfolios
- good training for additional qualifications
- good support for learners

### **Weaknesses**

- inadequate training plans

## **Retailing, customer service & transportation**

### **Strengths**

- effective short-term action-planning
- excellent support for learners
- good on-the-job training that meets industrial standards

### **Weaknesses**

- poor use of individual learning plans
- poor integration of on and off the job training
- some slow progress towards achievement of advanced modern apprenticeships

## DETAILED REINSPECTION FINDINGS

### LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

**Grade 3**

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

#### **Strengths**

- particularly good partnership work with employers
- open management approach to identifying problems and improving provision
- good focus on attainment of industrial standards
- good understanding of equality of opportunity by learners

#### **Weaknesses**

- some improvements to provision not fully established
- weak arrangements for referral to alternative provision
- insufficiently structured arrangements for supporting learners' literacy and numeracy needs

23. The association has particularly good partnerships with employers. Member garages receive regular mailings which help them keep up to date with legal and other issues, including the training requirements for their learners. Employers speak highly of the service provided by the association, some citing it as an essential service to their business and to the future supply of skilled staff. Employers are consulted about the provision offered. A useful pack has recently been launched to help improve employers' understanding of training requirements, and a useful briefing event held which employers were able to attend at a time to suit them and their business. Employers who did not attend this event were visited by a member of the association's staff who explained the pack and its relevance to their business. The executive committee of the association comprises local garage owners and senior staff from the motor industry. The chair of this committee also attends the monthly senior management meetings of the association, and keeps the association well informed of the views and needs of local garage businesses.

24. There is an open management approach to identifying problems and improving provision. Staff feel able to discuss problems with the director or senior staff at any time. Since the previous inspection, the business plan has been revised and expanded and now includes targets for the recruitment, retention, and achievement of specific groups of learners. Agendas for executive and senior committees now routinely incorporate business-planning, self-assessment, quality assurance, and equality of opportunity. There has been significant investment in computers, and staff now benefit from improved communications using e-mail and the association's intranet. Meetings are recorded more fully with action points logged and followed up at subsequent meetings. Performance data are starting to be used more effectively in management meetings,

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although some, such as the relative performance of different groups of learners, are not yet sufficiently prominent. The procedure for staff appraisal has been extensively revised and a new appraisal system was introduced in October 2003. Strengths, weaknesses, and areas for development are now identified more effectively. Useful personal development files recording staff training and certification were introduced in May 2003. Since the previous inspection, the rate of learners' progress has quickened. Full level 2 NVQ completion is now expected in 1.6 years, compared with 2.6 years at the time of the previous inspection. However, it is too early to assess the effect of this improvement on the overall achievement rates, which are still low. Learners starting training after the main intake in September have been identified as at much greater risk of leaving the programme early, with 75 per cent of late starters leaving within a year of joining the programme. In response to this, a useful scheme is being introduced enabling learners to work with an employer for a trial period, before committing themselves to starting the training programme.

25. There is good focus on learners attaining high industrial standards. As identified during the previous inspection, learners are given good support to facilitate career progression. Learners can take additional qualifications at the association's expense where these are important to their future employment. Membership of the motor trade's professional body is promoted to learners, and the association's learners have been very successful in national competitions for motor trades occupations. Some learners attend specific courses organised by motor manufacturers. In order to ensure that they will benefit fully from the programme, applicants take a test of written and numerical reasoning and mechanical aptitude before admission. Award evenings, gift vouchers and other incentives are provided to encourage high standards. Staff development includes good emphasis on specific occupational tasks to enable them to give effective technical support to learners.

26. The arrangements for learners who fail the assessments for entrance to the programme are weak. Only about 25 per cent of those who apply gain admission to the training programme. There is an informal understanding with local colleges, and some learners unable to secure a place at the association apply to one of these for training. However, guidance to learners is restricted to verbal advice when they attend for their tests. It does not extend to formal, written encouragement, or information on other training routes or sources of advice.

27. The arrangements for supporting learners' literacy and numeracy needs are insufficiently structured. Learners are required to successfully complete an assessment involving literacy and numeracy skills before admission to the programme. However this is not designed, and is not used, to identify their support needs. Learners are asked about dyslexia and colour blindness at the start of the programme. Learners who follow off-the-job training in one of the colleges now complete an initial assessment to identify their literacy and numeracy support needs. However, the association's staff are not always aware of this assessment or of its results. While learners' standard of literacy and numeracy is generally good, staff are insufficiently aware of how to identify and meet learners' support needs.

## Equality of opportunity

## Contributory grade 3

28. The association has made satisfactory progress in dealing with weaknesses in equality of opportunity. Policies have been rewritten. There is now a learners' entitlement statement, and the business plan includes a section on equality of opportunity. The contract with employers now includes a requirement that they either have their own policy, or adopt that of the association. An annual health and safety check is made of employers' premises, and this now includes a check that the employer has an adequate equal opportunities policy. Good quality material on equality of opportunity is now included in the learners' induction. The process for learners' progress reviews has been revised and they now include an opportunity to reinforce and develop learners' understanding of equality of opportunity. Guidance notes are available to help staff conduct reviews effectively. All the association's staff have now received useful training in equality of opportunity issues, and some have also completed the same extended induction training in equality of opportunity which the learners now receive. Learners now have a good understanding of equality of opportunity, and speak with confidence about issues such as harassment, which may affect them in the workplace. However, while staff do now record comments on equality of opportunity during learners' progress reviews, there is still insufficient use of the review process to reinforce and develop learners' and employers' understanding of equality.

29. Some data are now collected on equality of opportunity, and targets have been set in the business plan for recruitment by gender and minority ethnic grouping. Publicity materials have been revised and now contain more images of women and learners from minority ethnic groups. Numbers of women applying and starting training in the current year have increased, and 10 per cent of all the learners in training are now women. Equality of opportunity is now a standard agenda item at some meetings. However, the collection and use of data on the retention and achievement rates of different learner groups is still not given sufficient importance in the meetings and work of the association.

30. Access for learners with restricted mobility is satisfactory at both subcontracted colleges. While the association's training room is not accessible, satisfactory alternative arrangements are made when required to enable learners to participate in training sessions.

## Quality assurance

## Contributory grade 3

31. Since the previous inspection, the processes used to quality assure the provision have been revised extensively. However, some of the improvements made are not yet sufficiently established to judge their effect. There is a new quality assurance manual which staff have access to through the association's intranet. A quality assurance planner gives a useful overview of all quality assurance activities in the training year. The association has improved the monitoring of learners' progress, although some learners have only been introduced to the new system very recently and do not fully understand the process.

32. More use is now made of feedback from learners and employers to improve the

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provision, and plans are in place for this to be further extended and to form part of the annual quality assurance process. Where shortcomings have been identified, action has been taken to improve the provision. Actions identified from previous inspections and from self-assessment have resulted in systematic improvement. However, some of these improvements have yet to show their full impact. Revised progress reviews for learners have been introduced, but not all reviews are completed to the standard required to make full use of the new system. An innovative process has been developed to observe training provided by two local colleges. Each college now observes training in the other using a common format. However, only one observation has been carried out so far. While supportive comments were made in the written feedback from this observation, there was insufficient emphasis on further improvements to training practice.

33. While greatly improved monitoring now exists between the association and its college subcontractors, there is still insufficient information readily available to enable good links to be made between the training provided on, and off the job. A new internal verification procedure has been introduced and standardisation meetings introduced for assessors. Initial verification carried out using the new system appears thorough but has not yet proved consistent over time.

34. A new self-assessment report was produced in September 2003. The process involved most staff, and reflected the structure of the common inspection framework. Inspectors found the judgements in the report to be accurate, although it was rather descriptive in style. They awarded the same grades as those in the report.

## AREAS OF LEARNING

### Engineering, technology & manufacturing

Grade 3

Programmes inspected	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Work-based learning for young people	141	3

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

#### Strengths

- wide range of additional qualifications achieved
- good training opportunities in the workplace to enhance learners' skills
- effective assessment practices

#### Weaknesses

- some slow progress towards completion of modern apprenticeship frameworks
- insufficient integration of on- and off-the-job training
- ineffective use of individual learning plans

#### Achievement and standards

35. Historically, retention and achievement rates have been poor and progress through the modern apprenticeship framework has been slow. However, since the previous inspection, good action has been taken to bring about improvement. Detailed monitoring and recording systems are now in place and are shared and used by all staff to identify and improve progress. Staff have clear targets for retention and achievement rates and regular monitoring takes place. A typical modern apprenticeship lasts from two to five years and it is too early to make full judgements on the impact of improvements made. Training in key skills is subcontracted to local colleges, and the systems for recording and monitoring progress have been ineffective. Some learners have made slow progress towards completing their frameworks, and their key skills accreditation has been delayed. However both retention rates, and the achievement of NVQs are starting to improve, and learners' rate of progress is quickening. Of the vehicle maintenance advanced modern apprentices who have left the programme since the previous inspection, 64 per cent achieved an NVQ at level 2, and 49 per cent an NVQ at level 3. Of the vehicle body repair and paint advanced modern apprentices who have left the programme since the previous inspection, 73 per cent have successfully completed their NVQ at level 3.

36. The standard of learners' portfolios is satisfactory, with learners taking responsibility for evidence gathering and portfolio compilation. Most learners are now on target to achieve their intended goal on time. There is good achievement by most learners of

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additional training and qualifications in topics including fire fighting, mechanical handling, driving, equal opportunities and data protection. Learners also study and achieve NVQ units which are additional to their modern apprenticeship framework.

### **Quality of education and training**

37. There are good training opportunities in the workplace. Learners are employed in well-equipped garages and body repair workshops including small independent businesses and large modern dealerships, and deal with a wide range of maintenance and repair requirements. Learners receive good training in the workplace. They acquire a wide range of skills using equipment such as manufacturers' diagnostic computers, modern steering alignment gauges, and in some cases, expensive body repair jigs and paint mixing facilities. Many learners are trusted to carry out repair work on modern, expensive vehicles. An experienced worker or master technician is allocated to each learner as their mentor, taking responsibility for their practical training. Mentors also help learners obtain the required evidence for their NVQ portfolio. Learners have been very successful in industry-recognised regional and national competitions, and the apprentice of the year regional award has been won by the association's learners eight times in the past ten years.

38. Assessment practice is now effective. The association has recently appointed additional qualified assessors to conduct progress reviews and assessments in the workplace. Learners receive planned visits at their workplace at least every eight weeks. Good use is made of a wide range of assessment practices. Supervisors fully understand their role as work-based recorders in the training programme, and make effective use of witness testimony as evidence of competence. Good use is made of diverse evidence from the workplace. Learners' progress is recorded effectively during assessment visits, and clear action plans identify further work needed. This motivates learners and also informs employers of their progress. Internal verification has recently been restructured and is now thorough, but the effect of the changes has yet to be felt throughout the assessment process.

39. Resources in the subcontracted colleges are satisfactory. However, workshop vehicles do not reflect modern technology and as such can only be used for simulated exercises. Learners can occasionally work on road-going vehicles which require fault diagnosis and repair. Workshops are adequate for the range of work carried out, but classroom furniture is old and uncomfortable for learners, and rooms are not personalised for motor vehicle training. On-the-job training resources are generally good.

40. The association has good links with member companies to promote motor vehicle training. Surveys are carried out annually to ascertain the training requirements of member companies and plan learner recruitment. The needs of member companies and prospective learners are met. There are good progression opportunities for foundation modern apprentices. Association staff visit schools for careers events and to encourage young people to pursue a career in motor vehicle engineering, although there is little involvement in school link programmes. More women have been successfully recruited



into motor vehicle programmes since the previous inspection.

41. Support for learners is satisfactory. Learners are well aware of the eight-weekly visits to the workplace for review and assessment, and can also request additional informal visits. Learners have the telephone numbers of assessors and are encouraged to contact training staff for assistance and advice when required. Employers are supportive. They are fully aware of their role in the programme, take an active part in the reviews, and provide the training needed to help meet NVO requirements. Learners speak highly of the individual support they receive and the good response to problems encountered.

42. Entry to the training programme is selective, and last year there were approximately 250 applicants for 50 places. Most learners on the training programme have achieved at least some general certificates of secondary education (GCSEs) at grade C or above. While no learners have been identified as requiring additional support, there is little provision within the organisation to cater for additional learning needs which may exist.

43. There is insufficient integration of on- and off-the-job-training. Although learners receive details of off-the-job training activities, industrial supervisors and assessors do not. Practical training in the workplace is not sufficiently co-ordinated to prepare for, complement or reinforce work done at college. Learners are not actively encouraged to prepare for background knowledge training at college by studying specific vehicle technology requirements in advance.

44. There is ineffective use of individual learning plans. Long-term targets are set at the start of the learners' programme, but no medium and short-term targets are recorded. The plans are not individualised. Learners are not involved in compiling the document and most have little knowledge or understanding of the plan. Changes to the programme, or achievements and milestones met, are not recorded. Plans are not systematically used at reviews to record learners' progress.

### **Leadership and management**

45. Since the previous inspection, satisfactory action has been taken to improve the quality of training. Most actions have concentrated on improving retention and achievement rates by closer recording and monitoring of learners' progress. Since a typical modern apprenticeship lasts up to five years, the effects of these changes have yet to be fully felt. Three new assessors have recently been recruited to improve the collection of work-based evidence and the frequency of on-the-job assessment. Assessors have had considerable staff development. Internal verification procedures and learners' progress reviews have been revised, and are now satisfactory. The self-assessment report was informative and accurate in its overall judgement of the curriculum area, but failed to recognise some specific strengths and weaknesses identified by inspectors.

**Business administration, management & professional****Grade 2**

Programmes inspected	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Work-based learning for young people	28	2

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

**Strengths**

- good training which meets the industry's requirements
- good NVQ portfolios
- good training for additional qualifications
- good support for learners

**Weaknesses**

- inadequate training plans

**Achievement and standards**

46. Following the previous inspection, significant changes have been made to the programme. All new entrants are recruited as foundation modern apprentices and progress to an advanced modern apprenticeship on completion. Key skills training is now fully integrated with vocational training. Retention rates have improved significantly although it is too early to assess improvements in framework achievement rates. The slow progress towards framework achievement identified at the previous inspection has much improved. Of the current 12 advanced modern apprentices, four have completed their modern apprenticeship frameworks and are awaiting certification, and the remainder are making good progress towards completion. Eighteen foundation modern apprentices were recruited in 2002-03 and 16 of these are still in training. Two have already completed and are awaiting certification. Two advanced modern apprentices have completed the level 3 framework in less than one year, although their previous, level 2 framework took almost two years.

47. The standard of NVQ learners' portfolios is good. They are well presented, individual and demonstrate pride of ownership by learners. Most learners take appropriate responsibility for cross-referencing evidence to the occupational standards. Portfolios contain diverse evidence and specifically relate to motor trades administration. Assessors encourage learners to collect good documentary evidence relating to work activities. This supplements effective observations carried out in the workplace, and evidence collected from well-structured assignments and witness testimonies. There are also good learner statements. Key skills evidence is directly related to the motor trade. Learners' attainment is good and meets the requirements of local employers.

### **Quality of education and training**

48. The quality of training is good. Although the main focus of training is framework completion, it is also designed to meet the high standard set by the local motor industry. Employers provide a wide range of administrative experience for learners. The quality of on-the-job instruction is good. There are good, flexible arrangements for practical instruction with some effective coaching. Some learners move between jobs to increase their experience and many hold key administrative positions in car showrooms. Employers arrange their work to ensure learners can attend day-release training regularly. Wherever possible, adequate time is given to enable learners to complete their portfolios. There is a good standard of off-the-job training that covers both vocational and key skills elements.

49. As identified during the previous inspection, there is good training for additional qualifications. Learners achieve a good range of qualifications in areas such as typing, shorthand and computer literacy, which are additional to the requirements of their framework. Further courses are also completed including customer care, telephone manner, health and safety, first aid, and a wide range of company product courses such as importing and ordering cars.

50. There is good support for learners, as recognised during the previous inspection. Extensive vocational support is given by the assessor, and in addition employers have appointed dedicated mentors for each learner. They oversee on-the-job training and provide a high level of support. Learners are given good advice either during off-the-job training or when the assessor visits. Assessors and mentors assist effectively with key skills training and confidence building. Reviews of learners' progress are frequent, and provide extensive support. The assessor conducting the reviews is a trained counsellor. Reviews have good employer involvement and cover pastoral issues as well as programme advancement. For example, a learner who was given notice of redundancy was found suitable employment by the assessor in another motor trades distribution centre. Learners have achieved successes in both local and national awards. One learner achieved a prestigious award from a leading national motor industry body.

51. Resources are satisfactory. Staff are well qualified. Staff and learning resources are adequate, and handouts and exercises used in training are of good quality. Initial assessment is primarily used to select the most suitable candidates for referral to employers, and is not used to identify literacy or numeracy support needs. The current learners do not have identified literacy or numeracy needs, but there are no strategies to meet the needs of learners whose needs might be identified after their training has started. Arrangements for assessment and internal verification are adequate and meet the requirements of the awarding body.

52. Although assessments and reviews of learners' progress are followed by satisfactory short-term action-planning, there is inadequate overall planning of the training and assessment process. Individual learning plans are not held by learners and do not provide sufficient detail. There is no effective overall learning plan to enable learners to

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monitor their own progress. Employers, while providing good work experience, do not systematically plan on-the-job training. Planning of the overall assessment process is inadequate to ensure effective links with the employers' own training arrangements.

### **Leadership and management**

53. The management of this area of learning is satisfactory. Staff are adequately qualified and experienced to carry out their duties and they are given additional training as needed to keep up to date and enhance performance. Links with local employers are good. There are now adequate arrangements for contracting with and monitoring the key skills subcontractor. Specific staff targets in terms of NVQ achievement are set and met. Staff use management information to improve performance and to influence decisions. Good practice is shared with assessors in other occupational areas.

**Retailing, customer service & transportation****Grade 3**

Programmes inspected	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Work-based learning for young people	21	3

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

**Strengths**

- effective short-term action-planning
- excellent support for learners
- good on-the-job training that meets industrial standards

**Weaknesses**

- poor use of individual learning plans
- poor integration of on and off the job training
- some slow progress towards achievement of advanced modern apprenticeships

**Achievement and standards**

54. As identified during the previous inspection, there is some slow progress towards achievement of advanced modern apprenticeships. However, processes relating to assessment and monitoring of progress have improved considerably, and the rate of progress is beginning to speed up. Improved measures have been put in place to ensure learners are enrolled on the correct programme. Foundation modern apprentices now make good progress towards achievement of their qualification. While advanced modern apprentices still expect to take over two and a half years to complete their level 2 NVQ, this rate of progress is quickening and is already much better than that found during the previous inspection.

55. Rates of retention and achievement, overall, are now satisfactory. Of 16 advanced modern apprentices following parts and distribution programmes since the previous inspection, five have left with no qualifications, eight have achieved their level 2 NVQ, and five are still working towards their level 3 NVQ. Since the previous inspection, only three out of 14 foundation modern apprentices have left. The remaining 11 learners are making good progress towards achievement.

**Quality of education and training**

56. The new action plans introduced since the previous inspection are used very effectively to record short-term actions for learners. Assessors now find it easier to break down actions required and link them to relevant parts of the NVQ. Learners now fully understand what is expected of them between assessor's visits, and speak highly of the

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detailed discussions which identify the actions. Actions are clear and give plenty of scope for learners to gather a variety of evidence for the next visit. The action plans are also used to check learners' progress against the NVQ standards, as completed actions are ticked off after each visit.

57. Excellent support is provided for learners. A new assessor, who has just joined the association from the car industry, has a vast knowledge of the sector and of how the NVQ relates to learners' work. Good, clear guidance is given to learners without leading them in discussions, and learners have a thorough understanding of how their job relates to the NVQ. Feedback after assessment is very constructive and helps learners develop within their job roles. The assessor's industrial knowledge is frequently updated, and the excellent relations with employers help to ensure the effective, all-round development of the learners. Learners and employers speak very highly of the assessor's expertise.

58. Learners receive good on-the-job training that meets industrial standards. Work placements are well organised. Employers take an interest in learners' progress and provide good training that generates a wealth of evidence to help achieve the NVQ. Learners have the opportunity to move between different departments to increase the range of their skills and knowledge. Dealer-specific training takes place regularly and provides further evidence for the NVQ. Resources available to learners are of the highest industry standards and use the latest technology.

59. Assessment and internal verification have been extensively revised since the previous inspection and are now satisfactory. New staff have been recruited and a more effective procedure introduced. Learners now have a good understanding of the overall process. Records for monitoring progress are much improved, although some learners are still becoming familiar with the documents following their very recent introduction. Learners' portfolios are satisfactory. They contain a wide range of evidence and are well presented. Learners have a good understanding of evidence requirements and are constantly looking for opportunities to gather evidence in the workplace.

60. Learners' progress reviews are satisfactory. Together with the diary that all assessors complete, and the NVQ action-planning which follows assessment, they provide a comprehensive view of the learners' progress. Welfare issues are well documented and the support provided is outlined in the diary.

61. Key skills training is satisfactory. Key skills training is provided by the college and good work has been done to try and ensure that it relates to the motor industry. Projects require learners to investigate car dealership websites and typical motor customer situations. However, integration of key skills with NVQ training is still incomplete, and some learners perceive them as totally separate from the NVQ.

62. The use of individual learning plans is poor. Learners are unaware of the purpose of the plans. The assessors are not involved in their production, and the information held on the documents is insufficiently detailed. There is no detailed record of individual NVQ units with target dates for completion, and learners are unable to assess whether they are making adequate progress towards achievement. The plans are kept in the

learners' personal files and are not used in progress reviews. They are not kept adequately up-to-date.

63. Integration of on- and off-the-job training is poor. There are few links between the training carried out off-the-job and that carried out in the workplace. The learners view the two as being separate. There is insufficient communication between the college, employers and assessors.

### **Leadership and management**

64. Significant improvements have been made to the training programme. Many of these have been through completely new systems and the use of new staff. Staff are well managed and understand the association's strategic direction. Communications with the local college regarding off-the-job training are much improved. All staff have been involved in developments to improve the provision, including the production of the latest self-assessment report, and quality assurance has been improved considerably. Many improvements are recent and have yet to prove their full benefit to the learners' experience.

65. The initial assessment process includes an assessment of applicants' literacy and numeracy skills, and very few learners starting training need support. However the association has no overall strategy for dealing with literacy or numeracy needs which may arise during the training programme.