

# REINSPECTION REPORT

## **Orient Gold Ltd Reinspection**

**11 September 2003**



ADULT LEARNING  
INSPECTORATE

## ORIENT GOLD LTD 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.

# **REINSPECTION REPORT**

## **Orient Gold Ltd Reinspection**

### **Contents**

#### **Summary**

Description of the provider	1
Scope of provision	1
About the reinspection	3
Overall judgement	3
Grades	3
Key findings	4

#### **Detailed reinspection findings**

Leadership and management	12
Equality of opportunity	13
Quality assurance	14
Engineering, technology & manufacturing	15
Business administration, management & professional	18
Retailing, customer service & transportation	21
Hospitality, sport, leisure & travel	24

## REINSPECTION REPORT

### DESCRIPTION OF THE PROVIDER

1. Orient Gold Ltd (Orient Gold) is a privately owned limited liability company set up in 1996. The company's head office is now combined with its administration centre and is based in Ilkeston, Derbyshire. The company has one satellite centre at Dewsbury, Yorkshire. This functions as a drop-in centre for locally based assessors. The centre at Sleaford, Lincolnshire and the West Hallam head office have been closed since the previous inspection. The company has five directors, four of whom are shareholders. The number of staff has reduced to 58 since the previous inspection. There are now four senior co-ordinators, responsible for quality assurance and centre co-ordination, operations, health and safety, and business development, respectively. There are four area managers covering retailing and business administration in the north and south of the country, meat trades and hospitality. Thirty-four assessors, senior assessors and trainee assessors report to the area managers. An office manager and 15 administrative staff support the company's activities.

2. Orient Gold provides work-based learning for young people throughout England, and its programmes are now all funded through the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) national contract service. Training is provided to 1,243 learners in manufacturing (meat trade), business administration and management, retailing and customer service, and hospitality. Since the previous inspection, the company has ceased to provide training in engineering and in information and communications technology (ICT). Learners in these areas have been transferred to other providers. The company has started to provide management training.

### SCOPE OF PROVISION

#### Engineering, technology & manufacturing

3. There are 105 learners following meat trades programmes. Five are advanced modern apprentices in meat and poultry processing operations. Of the 99 foundation modern apprentices, 34 are on programmes in meat and poultry butchery operations, 13 in meat and poultry processing and manufacturing operations, and 52 in meat and meat-based product sales and distribution. One learner is following a national vocational qualification (NVQ) in meat and poultry processing at level 1. All learners are employed and are recruited through their employers. They work for organisations ranging from small independent businesses to large national companies, including retail outlets and processing plants. Learners are able to start their programmes at any time of the year. All training is given in the workplace. Assessors visit the learners regularly to observe their performance, and carry out progress reviews and key skills training sessions.

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

4. There are 55 learners on business administration or management training programmes. Seventeen are foundation modern apprentices, all in business administration, and 38 are advanced modern apprentices, 28 in management and 10 in business administration. Learners following business administration programmes are working towards an NVQ either at level 2 or 3. All the management learners are working towards an NVQ at level 3. All learners work towards key skills qualifications as part of their modern apprenticeship, and where appropriate, are also registered for a technical certificate. All learners are employed and all training takes place at their workplace, usually on an individual basis.

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

5. Six hundred and fifty-eight learners are on programmes in retailing, customer service and transportation. One hundred and sixty-one are advanced modern apprentices, 492 are foundation modern apprentices, and five are NVQ learners. Learners are working towards NVQs in retailing, customer service and distribution, and in warehousing, all at levels 2 or 3, along with key skills qualifications. Programmes are planned to last one year for foundation modern apprentices, and a year and a half or two years for advanced modern apprentices, depending on the learner's age. Most learning takes place through on-the-job training in the workplace. Assessments, progress reviews and some individual coaching by Orient Gold's staff are also carried out in the workplace. Learners are employed by a range of organisations, including local and national companies, and are based throughout the country.

### **Hospitality, sport, leisure & travel**

6. There are 426 learners on hospitality and catering programmes, 370 of whom are foundation modern apprentices and 56 are advanced modern apprentices. They are working towards a range of qualifications which include hospitality supervision, food preparation, food and drink service, bar service, housekeeping, reception, and quick service. All learners are recruited directly from industry and are employed in a wide range of establishments, from privately owned hotels, restaurants and licensed premises, to national chains. Most training is provided in the workplace by employers or supervisors. Assessors from Orient Gold make frequent and regular visits to assess learners in the workplace.

## ABOUT THE REINSPECTION

Number of inspectors	12
Number of inspection days	55
Number of learner interviews	91
Number of staff interviews	57
Number of employer interviews	43
Number of locations/sites/learning centres visited	1
Number of visits	61

## OVERALL JUDGEMENT

7. The previous inspection was carried out in October 2002 and judged that the quality of Orient Gold's training in engineering, retailing and customer service, ICT, and hospitality was unsatisfactory. The company's leadership and management, quality assurance and equal opportunities arrangements were also unsatisfactory. The quality of business administration training was satisfactory. At the end of the reinspection process, all the areas of learning still provided by the company were judged to be satisfactory, as were Orient Gold's leadership and management. Quality assurance arrangements and the company's approach to equal opportunities were also satisfactory.

## 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>4</b>	<b>3</b>
Contributory grades:		
Equality of opportunity	4	3
Quality assurance	4	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>3</b>
Contributory grades:		
Work-based learning for young people	3	3

## ORIENT GOLD LTD REINSPECTION

	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>Hospitality, sport, leisure &amp; travel</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>
Contributory grades:		
Work-based learning for young people	4	3

## KEY FINDINGS

### Achievement and standards

**8. Fewer learners are leaving their programmes early without achieving their qualifications.** On meat trade programmes, 84 per cent of the learners who started programmes in 2002-03, are still in learning, compared with 57 per cent in 2001-02. On retailing and customer service programmes, the retention rate has improved markedly since the previous inspection. In 2002-03, it was 78 per cent for advanced and 70 per cent for foundation modern apprentices, while in 2001-02 the figures were 29 per cent and 34 per cent, respectively. On hospitality programmes, the retention rate for foundation modern apprentices has risen from 46 to 81 per cent and for advanced modern apprentices from 24 to 90 per cent.

9. On business administration programmes, while the retention rate is still poor, learners who started training in 2002-03 are progressing according to plan and the work in their portfolios is satisfactory. Of the 28 learners who started the new management programme in February 2003, 25 are still on the programme.

**10. Achievement rates are still poor in all areas of learning.** In 2001-02, only 20 per cent of learners on meat trade programmes completed their modern apprenticeship frameworks. On retailing and customer service programmes, the achievement rate for advanced modern apprentices was 20 per cent in 2000-01 and 1 per cent in 2001-02. The corresponding figures for foundation modern apprentices were 19 per cent and 10 per cent. It is too early for many of the changes made by the company to have affected the annual achievement figures.

**11. Many learners on retailing and customer service programmes are making slow progress towards achieving their qualifications.** Many have been on programme for a significant amount of time and although they have started on several units of their qualifications, these have not all been assessed. Some learners have not had their previous learning fully recognised and accredited.



## 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
Business administration, management & professional	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Retailing, customer service & transportation	0	0	1	2	0	0	0	3
Hospitality, sport, leisure & travel	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>5</b>

Grades awarded to learning sessions

	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Total
Engineering, technology & manufacturing	0	0	1	0	1	0	1	3
Business administration, management & professional	0	0	1	2	0	0	0	3
Retailing, customer service & transportation	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>8</b>

12. Inspectors observed eight learning sessions. Seventy-five per cent of these sessions were judged to be satisfactory or better. Two unsatisfactory sessions were observed on meat trade programmes.

**13. There is good short-term target-setting for learners on meat trade programmes.**

Assessors visit learners in their workplace frequently. The visits are well planned to ensure effective observation of learners carrying out practical tasks. At each visit, learners receive detailed written and verbal feedback on their progress.

14. **Orient Gold has effective links with meat trade employers.** Employers provide good on-the-job training to develop learners' practical butchery skills. In one large national employer, this has now been matched to the requirements of the learners' qualification. Employers are enthusiastic and supportive of the learning programmes on offer.

15. **Learners following meat trade qualifications at level 2 produce very good portfolios of evidence.** These are well structured and clearly presented and contain a wide range of different types of evidence. Two learners have been named foundation modern apprentice of the year by a national trade organisation.

16. **Orient Gold arranges good quality work placements for business administration learners.** Many learners are employed in responsible and challenging job roles that allow them to effectively develop their skills. Many employers offer learners the opportunity to experience work in a number of different departments or job roles to meet the full requirements of their qualifications.

17. **Business administration learners benefit from particularly effective pastoral and**

**learning support.** Individual assessors visit them frequently in their workplace. The learners have confidence in their assessors and often turn to them for pastoral support.

**18. The new systems for planning and recording training are being used particularly effectively in business administration.** The systems now enable the effective integration of NVQs, key skills and technical certificates.

**19. Orient Gold offers very good support to retailing and customer service learners** through frequent and effective visits, some of which take place at weekends or in the evening. The assessors are knowledgeable, and pass on their expertise so that learners can take responsibility for their own learning programmes.

**20. There is particularly good development of skills for retailing and customer service learners.** Training for learners in large organisations with in-house programmes is matched to their qualifications and used as evidence for assessment. Learners are gaining good skills to equip them for their work in the retail industry.

**21. Hospitality learners also receive good individual support.** Assessors visit them frequently in their workplace. The outcomes of the visits are recorded well and identify good, measurable short-term targets for learners. Optional units are chosen well and reflect the learner's job role. Assessors use good questioning techniques to ensure the learners' knowledge is accurate. Key skills are introduced early into learners' programmes and integrated well with the training programme. However, foundation modern apprentices do not achieve their technical certificates until late in their programme.

**22.** Learners and new assessors receive a thorough induction to hospitality programmes. Learners' induction takes place over 12 weeks, and covers all aspects of their training. Learners are fully involved in self-evaluation, and understand the training process and their commitment to it. There is a good programme for the personal development of new assessors and they are mentored well by more senior staff.

**23.** Resources are generally satisfactory across the provision. Meat trades learners are issued with support booklets for each unit of their qualification, which they complete between assessors' visits. The assessors mark the responses and give feedback. A laptop computer is available for learners to use, but is shared between two assessors. Staff are well qualified and experienced. Retailing and customer service staff have substantial levels of occupational experience, much of which is recent. Many staff have key skills qualifications, or have attended internal key skills training sessions.

**24.** Initial assessment is now satisfactory for all new learners. Orient Gold now routinely uses a range of appropriate tools to assess learners' literacy and numeracy skills. Learners' occupational abilities are assessed using skills scans, and their learning styles are checked by the use of suitable questionnaires. The process actively involves all learners in evaluating their learning styles, and in reviewing their job roles and associating these with the NVQ units they are working towards. The new process is more comprehensive in identifying additional support needs. It has not yet been fully

established throughout the company. All learners' identified needs are not yet being fully met.

25. Induction is also now satisfactory. The company has a more detailed and thorough process than at the previous inspection. All aspects of health and safety are covered, as are equal opportunities issues. Some of the systems now used are very new and have not yet fully impacted on the experiences of all learners.

26. Most aspects of training are now satisfactory. In business administration and management, training enables learners to acquire and develop the skills to achieve their qualification. The progress review process is satisfactory for retailing learners. Reviews are carried out regularly and information is adequately recorded. However, there are some examples of bland and non-specific comments.

27. Internal verification is now satisfactory across all programmes. In meat trades, it is planned to ensure that all learners' work is verified during, and at the end of, the programme. However, verification at the end of the programme has sometimes been missed. On retailing programmes, there is a detailed internal verification policy, and both sampling of assessors' decisions, and observation of their performance, is formally planned. Staff carrying out internal verification were, however, unaware of some of the basic requirements of qualification assessment strategies. On hospitality programmes, all learners receive a separate visit from an internal verifier during their training, and the observation of assessors is well planned. On business administration programmes, while internal verification is satisfactory, the company has been slow to respond to some new requirements, such as monitoring assessors for continued professional development. There are no centralised records of monitoring.

28. **There is some poor key skills training on meat trades programmes.** Some sessions are poorly planned and take place in an inappropriate environment. The activities are not explained clearly to the learner, and in one case the learner's level of background knowledge was inadequate to enable him to complete the task. However, inspectors also observed an effective key skills session, which had been well planned with resources organised to ensure maximum benefit to the learner.

29. **In business administration, the recording of key aspects of the assessment process is sometimes inadequate.** For some learners, the records of reviews and planning, and the documents used in monitoring contain insufficient detail and are sometimes unreliable. There have been significant recent improvements in this area, but the omissions have not yet been rectified for all learners.

30. **On business administration programmes, the response to the knowledge requirements of the technical certificates has been inadequate** until very recently. There are insufficient learning materials to support the new management qualification and the technical certificate in administration.

## Leadership and management

31. **There have been significant, effective improvements in the leadership and management of Orient Gold since the previous inspection.** The company has reviewed all the major processes covering its management of training. It has invested significant energy and resources in revising processes and ensuring that they are appropriate and focus on the needs of learners. It has introduced new and detailed individual learning plans, a new induction process and detailed initial assessment.

32. The new management information system has now been implemented, and **data are more reliable than at the previous inspection.** Data are now analysed by areas of learning and intakes of learners, and the company has started to identify performance trends and set targets.

33. Orient Gold has carried out a detailed review of its business. As a result, it has closed premises, reduced staffing and introduced more effective financial management. There is now long-term strategic and business planning which is appropriate for the current size of the organisation.

34. **There have been recent effective actions to improve quality assurance.** The company has produced a quality assurance framework that is clear, understandable and covers most of the key training processes. However, it does not include monitoring the quality of on-the-job training provided by employers. Arrangements are in place for quality assurance system audits, although only a few of these have been carried out so far.

35. The company has taken action to deal with weaknesses in equal opportunities identified at the previous inspection. **There has been particularly effective staff training on equal opportunities.** All staff had the opportunity to attend a recent in-house equal opportunities training day and to participate in an open learning training programme designed to raise their awareness of equal opportunities issues and recent legislation.

36. The company has recently introduced an equal opportunities work pack which is giving learners a broad and better understanding of the issues associated with equality.

37. Internal verification is satisfactory in all areas of learning. The quality assurance co-ordinator is responsible for internal verification. There is a detailed and clear sampling strategy.

38. **There have been clear recent actions to respond to learners' additional learning support needs.** The company has recently developed a strategy with specific performance targets for learning support. All new learners have an initial literacy and numeracy assessment using nationally produced materials. The new strategy has yet to fully affect the experiences of all learners.

39. The company has now started to analyse data on learners' gender, ethnicity and disabilities, and is in the process of identifying the impact of cultural issues on

participation rates on specific courses. So far, no action has been generated from these initiatives.

40. **There is ineffective monitoring of assessors' workloads.** Orient Gold circulates daily reports on the number of learners allocated to each assessor, but these do not show a complete picture of the assessors' work.

41. **Learners' achievement rates are still poor. However, the retention rate is improving in most areas of learning.** The company's new quality assurance arrangements, initial assessment systems and revised induction process are designed to ensure learners are guided on to appropriate learning programmes and gain their qualifications. These changes have not yet affected the overall achievement rates.

42. The company's new quality assurance arrangements are not yet sufficiently implemented. **There are inconsistent practices in the management and delivery of learning within and between areas of learning.** Inspectors found regional variations in the quality of the provision and in learners' progress on their programmes. Good practice is not always shared.

43. **There is insufficient promotion of best practice on meat trades programmes.** Team members do not share effective teaching tips and techniques. There are regular opportunities for the team to meet to share ideas, but these are not always used to good effect. Best practice in the use of protective clothing is not promoted sufficiently to the learners.

44. **There is insufficient monitoring of the quality of training in hospitality.** All hospitality training takes place at work and is given mainly by supervisors and managers, but Orient Gold does not monitor the training process or its quality. Assessors do not observe training and are only able to make judgements when the learner is assessed.

45. Since the previous inspection, the business administration department has experienced a very high turnover of staff. There have been insufficient resources to adequately support the continuing professional development needs of staff employed in this area.

46. The company recently completed an updated self-assessment report for the reinspection. Staff have been involved in producing the report, and learners' and employers' views have been sought through telephone contacts, interviews and questionnaires. Although the leadership and management areas of the report are detailed and thorough, the sections for individual areas of learning are insufficiently analytical. The grades given by inspectors matched those in the self-assessment report.

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

### **Leadership and management**

#### **Strengths**

- positive leadership and management in response to the previous inspection
- clear progress on business- and financial-planning
- effective staff training for equal opportunities
- significant progress through management action to improve quality assurance arrangements

#### **Weaknesses**

- ineffective monitoring of assessors' workloads
- poor achievement rates
- insufficient implementation of new quality assurance arrangements

### **Engineering, technology & manufacturing**

#### **Strengths**

- good short-term target-setting
- effective links with employers
- very good portfolios produced by learners following NVQs at level 2

#### **Weaknesses**

- poor achievement rates
- some poor key skills training
- insufficient promotion of best practice

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

### **Strengths**

- good-quality work placements
- particularly effective individual support for learners
- some effective use of newly introduced systems

### **Weaknesses**

- poor achievement and retention rates
- some inadequate recording of some aspects of the assessment process
- delayed response to the requirement for technical certificates

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

### **Strengths**

- very good support for learners
- particularly good development of learners' skills

### **Weaknesses**

- poor achievement rates
- slow progress for many learners

## **Hospitality, sport, leisure & travel**

### **Strengths**

- good support for individual learners
- good induction for learners and assessors

### **Weaknesses**

- poor achievement rates
- insufficient monitoring of training

## DETAILED REINSPECTION FINDINGS

### LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Grade 3

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

#### Strengths

- positive leadership and management in response to the previous inspection
- clear progress on business- and financial-planning
- effective staff training for equal opportunities
- significant progress through management action to improve quality assurance arrangements

#### Weaknesses

- ineffective monitoring of assessors' workloads
- poor achievement rates
- insufficient implementation of new quality assurance arrangements

47. There has been significant and effective improvement in Orient Gold's leadership and management since the previous inspection. The company has reviewed all the major processes covering the management of training, and has invested significant energy and resources in revising them and ensuring that the new processes are appropriate and focus on the needs of learners. Managers realised they needed external assistance in this and have been active and open in acquiring additional expertise and encouraging new ideas. Within this process, the company has introduced new and detailed individual learning plans, a new induction process and detailed initial assessment. It has now implemented its new management information system and is in the process of defining and dealing with its remaining problems with data. The company now has increasing confidence in the integrity of the data used by its managers and staff. Data are now analysed by intake and by area of learning. This has enabled the company to focus effectively on performance trends. Learners' performance in individual units can now be monitored. The improvements in data management have allowed the company to move towards a target-setting culture.

48. Orient Gold has carried out a detailed review of its business, as a result of which it has closed premises, reduced surplus staffing and provided more effective financial management. There is now appropriate long-term strategic and business-planning. Job roles and responsibilities have been re-aligned to meet the company's needs. The company produced a detailed post-inspection action plan which has been updated frequently.

49. There have been clear recent actions to deal with learners' additional learning



support needs. The company has recently developed a strategy for learning support which includes specific performance targets. Two members of staff have taken responsibility for the area and are being trained. All new learners have an initial assessment of their literacy and numeracy needs which uses Basic Skills Agency tests. There are new initiatives to help learners with support needs, for example, by designing simple dictionaries of jargon for occupational areas. Some of these initiatives are too new to judge their effect on the learners.

50. There is ineffective monitoring of assessors' workloads. Although Orient Gold circulates daily reports on the number of learners allocated to each assessor, these do not show a complete picture of the assessors' work. They do not take fully into account all the learners for whom the assessors have responsibility. The company is trying to deal with this through a new system linked with target-setting, but this has not been fully implemented yet or understood by staff.

51. Learners' achievement rates are still poor. However, retention rates are improving in most areas of learning. The company's new quality assurance arrangements, initial assessment systems and revised induction process are designed to ensure learners are guided on to appropriate learning programmes and gain their qualifications. These changes have not yet affected the overall achievement rates. Staff give an increased priority to ensuring that learners achieve their key skills qualifications. Test results are analysed and areas of poor performance explored. Detailed analysis has recently started on why learners leave their programmes before gaining a qualification. These data are discussed with staff teams to identify and rectify any trends.

### **Equality of opportunity**

### **Contributory grade 3**

52. Orient Gold has a comprehensive and detailed equal opportunities policy which is regularly updated. However, it does not make any reference to celebrating diversity. There is an effective complaints procedure. Learners are fully aware of the support they can receive and complaints are dealt with in an appropriate manner.

53. The company has taken action to deal with the weaknesses in its approach to equal opportunities identified at the previous inspection. There has been particularly effective staff training focused on equal opportunities. All staff had the opportunity to attend a recent in-house equal opportunities training day, and to participate in an open learning programme designed to raise awareness of equal opportunities in particular and recent legislation in general. Equal opportunities is championed by the managing director who, along with other managers, is participating in the programme. The open learning course has been instrumental in raising the profile of equal opportunities within the company and in identifying relevant projects such as the introduction of an interpreter for learners in an Asian supermarket. Other initiatives include the production of learner support cards with dedicated telephone numbers learners can ring to discuss confidential and/or personal issues, and a new equal opportunities pack for learners to use at induction. This pack has only recently been piloted with a group of learners, but inspectors found it particularly effective in enhancing learners' understanding.

## ORIENT GOLD LTD REINSPECTION

54. Data are collected on a range of issues including learners' gender, ethnicity and disabilities. The company has now started to analyse the data in order to identify the impact of cultural background on participation in particular courses, for example, participation by women and learners from minority ethnic groups in butchery programmes. So far, no action has been generated from these initiatives. There has been some progress on the monitoring of employers' equal opportunities policies. The company has produced a list of referral points such as websites, addresses, and contacts for employers who require additional information on appropriate equal opportunities policies and procedures.

### Quality assurance

### Contributory grade 3

55. There has been recent effective action to improve Orient Gold's quality assurance arrangements. Quality assurance is now the responsibility of a senior co-ordinator and a small dedicated team. The company has produced a quality assurance framework in order to achieve continuous improvements. This framework is clear, understandable and covers most of the key training processes. However, it does not include monitoring the quality of on-the-job training provided by employers. There is now a comprehensive policy and procedures manual with accompanying documents which are version and issue controlled. Arrangements are in place for quality assurance system audits, although because the audit system is so new only a few of these have been carried out so far. Senior managers and directors sample the audits, and identified weaknesses in assessors' performance result in individual discussions and additional staff training. Staff performance is graded against these key processes.

56. Although there has been significant progress in the company's approach to quality assurance, the new arrangements are not yet sufficiently implemented. There are inconsistent practices in the management and delivery of learning within and between areas of learning. Inspectors found regional variations in the quality of the provision, and in learners' progress. Good practice is not always shared effectively between assessors.

57. Internal verification for all areas of learning is satisfactory. The responsibility for internal verification rests with the quality assurance manager. There is a detailed and clear sampling strategy.

58. The company updated its self-assessment report for the reinspection. Staff have been involved in producing the report, and learners' and employers' views have been sought through telephone contacts, interviews and questionnaires. The leadership and management areas of the report are detailed and thorough, but the sections for individual areas of learning are insufficiently analytical. The inspectors gave the same grades as those in the self-assessment report.

## AREAS OF LEARNING

### Engineering, technology & manufacturing

Grade 3

Programmes inspected	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Work-based learning for young people	105	3

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

#### Strengths

- good short-term target-setting
- effective links with employers
- very good portfolios produced by learners following NVQs at level 2

#### Weaknesses

- poor achievement rates
- some poor key skills training
- insufficient promotion of best practice

### Achievement and standards

59. Achievement rates are still poor for meat trades learners. Between 2001-02, only 20 per cent of learners achieved their modern apprenticeship framework. However, a more thorough induction and new individual learning plans have been introduced since the previous inspection. Learners' achievements are now discussed and recorded in detail at each visit. Learners complete a number of units of their qualifications at the same time. Progress towards these units is satisfactory.

60. Retention rates show an improving trend. On meat trade programmes, of the 101 learners who started in 2002-03, 84 per cent are still in learning. This is a significant improvement on a comparative figure of 57 per cent for 2001-02.

### Quality of education and training

61. There is good short-term target-setting for learners on meat trade programmes. Assessors visit learners in their workplace at least every four weeks. The visits are well planned to ensure the learner is observed carrying out practical tasks, and to ensure maximum coverage of the requirements of the learner's programme. At the end of each visit, assessors give the learners detailed feedback on their progress and identify specific short-term targets for the next visit. These include completion of key skills project research and of learning support materials provided for each unit of the learner's qualification. At the beginning of each visit, these targets are reviewed and discussed

## ORIENT GOLD LTD REINSPECTION

and, when necessary, re-negotiated. Sometimes the targets relate to practical skills training provided by the employer. At each visit, learners receive detailed written and verbal feedback on their progress towards achieving their targets.

62. Orient Gold has effective links with employers. These include local independent traders, national high street chains and large processing plants operating from more than one site. Employers receive an induction folder outlining the learning programmes and their role and responsibilities. Employers provide learners with good on-the-job training in practical butchery skills. In one large national organisation, the on-the-job training programme has been matched to the requirements of the learners' qualification. Twenty-five per cent of the learners are employed by this organisation. Assessors have open access to their learners, and employers ensure facilities and resources are available for assessment visits. Workplaces are appropriate and of a high standard. Employers are enthusiastic and supportive of the learning programmes on offer. For example, in one organisation, assessors have been issued with the corporate headgear to enable them to blend in with staff during assessment visits. Learners are given demanding practical tasks early on in their learning programme. For example, one employer gave his learner the most expensive animal on which gain his butchery skills as he felt that it was important for the learner to gain an early understanding of the value of the products being processed.

63. Learners following NVQ programmes at level 2 produce very good portfolios of evidence. These are well structured and clearly presented. They contain a range of diverse evidence, observation reports, assignments and completed learning support packs for each unit. Learners complete a project for their key skills qualifications. The projects are well designed and include graphics and detailed costing sheets. Some portfolios contain photographs of the learners demonstrating practical skills. Some employers are involved in reviews of learners' progress, but not all. Learners are issued with the appropriate qualification standards early in their programme. The assessors use these as a checklist after each assessment to confirm achievement and to identify gaps. Two learners have been named foundation modern apprentice of the year by a national trade organisation, and in 2002 the learner and members of Orient Gold's staff were invited to the Guild Hall in London for the presentation.

64. Resources for this area of learning are satisfactory. Support booklets are issued which provide learners with effective background knowledge and understanding of their job role. A laptop computer is available for key skills training, but is shared between two assessors. Some learners do not have access to a computer at work or at home and their achievement is slow in some aspects of their key skills projects.

65. Internal verification is satisfactory. It is planned to ensure that all learners' work is verified summatively and formatively. However, on some occasions the sampling only occurs formatively. Each assessor is observed at workplaces annually. Sampling takes place across all units and all qualifications. Sampling is accurate and reflects a true picture of the assessors' performance and the learners' progress, noting corrective measures when required. Lead internal verifiers meet every month to share information and best practice.

66. There is some poor key skills training. Some sessions are poorly planned and take place in an inappropriate environment. For example, in one observed session, the assessor and learner were leaning on a small counter with loud music playing overhead. The activities are not always explained clearly to the learner, and in one case the learner's level of background knowledge was inadequate to enable him to complete the task and the session was abandoned. However, inspectors also observed an effective key skills session, which had been well planned, with resources organised to ensure maximum benefit to the learner.

### **Leadership and management**

67. There has been a significant improvement in the management of training in this area. The new induction process and the new individual learning plan has been introduced effectively for new learners. Larger employers have been involved in the matching of their in-house training to learners' qualification requirements. Orient Gold provides effective opportunities for small independent traders to ensure their employees can gain qualifications in the meat industry. It has made significant efforts to ensure that training can be delivered at small organisations in rurally isolated communities.

68. There is insufficient promotion of best practice. Team members do not share effective teaching tips and techniques. The lead internal verifier for meat and butchery holds monthly meetings with the team to disseminate information, check the progress of individual learners and update the team on the latest requirements for their area. These meetings are not always used to good effect. Best practice in the use of protective clothing is not sufficiently promoted to the learners.

69. The self-assessment report for this area of learning identified some, but not all, of the strengths and weaknesses identified at the inspection. Inspectors' grades matched those given in the self-assessment report.

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

Programmes inspected	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Work-based learning for young people	55	3

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

**Strengths**

- good-quality work placements
- particularly effective individual support for learners
- some effective use of newly introduced systems

**Weaknesses**

- poor achievement and retention rates
- some inadequate recording of some aspects of the assessment process
- delayed response to the requirement for technical certificates

**Achievement and standards**

70. Achievement and retention rates for business administration learners are still poor and there has been little overall change from the previous inspection. Improvements have been made to the quality assurance system and initial assessment, but it is too early to measure their impact on learners' achievement. The retention rate has improved slightly for business administration foundation modern apprentices.

71. There are recent indications that learners who started training during 2002-03 are progressing according to plan, and the work produced so far in individual portfolios is satisfactory. Portfolio-evidence for these learners suggests that they are on target to complete their training within the planned time.

72. The achievement and retention rates for learners on the management programme are not yet available as the programme has only been running since February 2003. The early indications are that the retention rate for management learners is satisfactory with 25 of the 28 learners recruited, still in learning at the time of the inspection.

**Quality of education and training**

73. Learners have good-quality work placements. Many are employed in responsible and challenging job roles which enable them to develop skills in business administration. Many employers offer learners the opportunity to try a number of different departments or job roles to meet the full requirements of the NVQ. Learners have also developed confidence through employment and training. Many employers value the learners'

contributions to the day-to-day running of their businesses, and offer them good on-the-job training.

74. Business administration learners benefit from particularly effective support. Individual assessors make frequent visits to learners' workplaces, and provide a high level of support. The learners often turn to their assessors for pastoral support and they value the help their assessors give. Most learners have their assessors' mobile phone numbers and the assessors are frequently available to answer calls even outside working hours. Learners benefit from good support during induction and from a satisfactory initial assessment. Orient Gold has recently carried out an exercise to match certain job roles to the business administration NVQ. While it is too early to measure the impact of this initiative, it has been designed to improve the support the learners are given with the evidence-gathering requirements of the qualification.

75. There is some recent effective use of the new systems and paperwork, for the assessment and monitoring of business administration learners' progress. The new system has enabled assessors to plan effectively and integrate training for the NVQ, key skills and the technical certificate. Administration learners are clear on the progress they are making and their future learning. The assessment of learners on management programmes is generally satisfactory.

76. Many aspects of the business administration training are satisfactory. The procedures to assess individual learning needs are satisfactory. All learners receive a basic initial assessment which is then followed up by a series of tests to determine precise areas in which they may need additional support. Staff visit the learners in the workplace regularly, usually at least every four weeks for assessment and coaching and every 12 weeks to carry out formal progress reviews. All training takes place in the workplace, usually individually. It enables learners to acquire and develop the skills necessary to achieve business administration or management qualifications.

77. The procedures and systems for internal verification are satisfactory. Some aspects of the system are very new and have not yet had time to affect the learners. The company has been slow to respond to some of the new requirements placed on internal verifiers, such as monitoring assessors for continued professional development. There are no centralised records which detail this.

78. There has been some inadequate recording of some key aspects of the assessment process. Orient Gold identified this weakness in its self-assessment report. The records of progress reviews, planning and monitoring of some learners who are established in their learning programmes lack sufficient detail, and are sometimes unreliable. There have been significant recent improvements in this area, but the omissions have not yet been rectified for all learners.

79. The portfolios of learners who have enrolled during 2003-04 are satisfactory. However, until very recently there has been an inadequate response to the knowledge requirements of the technical certificates. There are insufficient learning materials to support the new management qualification and the technical certificate in

## ORIENT GOLD LTD REINSPECTION

administration. There has been a high staff turnover, and Orient Gold recognises that further development is still necessary to ensure that all learners receive adequate training for the technical certificates. Staff have very recently started to identify appropriate resources to support the programme.

### **Leadership and management**

80. The systems to ensure the quality of training and assessment are still very new, but staff are now being regularly monitored and observed.

81. Since the previous inspection, the business administration section has experienced a very high turnover of staff. There have been insufficient resources to adequately support the continuing professional development needs of staff.

82. Orient Gold identified in its self-assessment report, the strength of good support and the weaknesses in achievement and record-keeping identified in this reinspection. The good-quality work placements and the effective implementation of recently introduced systems were not identified as strengths in the self-assessment report.



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

Programmes inspected	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Work-based learning for young people	658	3

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

**Strengths**

- very good support for learners
- particularly good development of learners' skills

**Weaknesses**

- poor achievement rates
- slow progress for many learners

**Achievement and standards**

83. The achievement rates of learners on retail, customer service and transportation programmes are still poor. For learners on advanced modern apprenticeship programmes, the achievement rates for 2000-01 and 2001-02 were 20 per cent and 1 per cent respectively. The corresponding figures for foundation modern apprenticeships were 19 per cent and 10 per cent.

84. The retention rate has improved markedly since the previous inspection to 78 per cent for advanced and 70 per cent for foundation modern apprentices. This compares with 29 per cent and 34 per cent, respectively, for the same programmes in the year 2001-02. Fewer learners have left the programme without achieving their qualifications than at the time of the previous inspection. There are still 658 learners on programme who have the opportunity to achieve their qualifications.

85. Many learners make slow progress toward achieving their qualifications. There has been some improvement in this since the previous inspection. Many learners have started to gather evidence for several units of their qualifications, but these have not been finally assessed in a timely way. Some learners have little or no evidence or assessment records in their portfolios after several months on programme. Assessment planning is often poor, with longer-term plans being insufficiently detailed to prepare learners for assessment. Plans are not always updated once assessment has taken place.

86. The recent introduction of new learning and assessment plans has begun to remedy these problems. Assessment practice is adequate. The new systems have not yet been fully introduced into all areas of retailing training. In previous years, key skills training has been started late in many learners' programmes, delaying their overall progress. This is not the case for most new learners. Some learners are still required to achieve key skills

## ORIENT GOLD LTD REINSPECTION

units, even though they already hold equivalent qualifications. In some cases, little account has been taken of learners' previous occupational experience when planning what they still have to achieve. Changes of assessor have hindered the progress of some learners.

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

87. Orient Gold gives very good support to learners. Assessors make frequent visits to the workplace, specifically tailored to learners' needs. The visits are flexible and are often in the evenings or at weekends. At the visits, assessors set good, short-term targets to help with evidence collection and training needs. Learners are able to contact assessors easily between visits if they need assistance, and there are good working relationships between learners and assessors. Learners feel confident in discussing personal or work-related issues. Assessors have high levels of experience both of the NVQ and the industry. This is effectively passed on to the learners, who, in most cases, demonstrate a good understanding of the modern apprenticeship framework requirements. Assessors effectively use NVQ standards to brief learners, encouraging them to take responsibility for their training programme.

88. There is particularly good development of learners' skills and knowledge. They are employed in good-quality workplaces. Most learners receive a structured training programme which meets their employers' needs and is also very relevant to their modern apprenticeship framework. Orient Gold links the employers' training to the framework. This process has been improved since the previous inspection, when it was identified as a weakness, but does not yet cover all workplaces. Learners are progressing well in their job roles, with some having moved on to supervisory or assistant manager positions, and taken on additional responsibilities. Both on-the-job training and coaching by assessors is effectively linked to the employers' organisational development needs. For example, a project carried out by a learner involved re-designing a shop. The design was implemented by the learner's employer and was also used as key skills evidence. Many workplace managers are providing good support for the learners and are involving themselves in the training programme.

89. Initial assessment is now satisfactory. It has improved significantly since the previous inspection. Orient Gold now routinely uses a range of appropriate tools to assess learners' literacy and numeracy skills. Learners' occupational abilities are assessed through the use of skills scans, and their learning styles are checked using suitable questionnaires. Most learners have no additional learning support needs, and this information is clearly recorded on individual learning plans.

90. Learners' progress reviews are now satisfactory. Reviews are carried out at least every eight weeks, and recorded. However, while some assessors use review record forms, others make brief details of the progress review on a visit report form. Some comments in review records are bland and non-specific.

91. The level of resources is satisfactory. Staff have substantial occupational experience,

much of which is recent. All are qualified assessors and internal verifiers, or are working towards appropriate qualifications, supported by qualified colleagues. Many staff have key skills qualifications, or have attended internal key skills training sessions. There is some use of handouts to support the development of learners' background knowledge of such topics as customer service principles and consumer legislation. Laptop computers are occasionally taken to learners' workplaces to help with coaching for key skills.

92. Internal verification is now satisfactory. There is a detailed internal verification policy and sampling of assessors' decisions. Observation of their performance is planned formally, and carried out continuously. The sampling and observations are recorded fully, as are interviews with the learners. Staff carrying out internal verification duties are, however, unaware of some of the basic assessment requirements.

93. Induction of learners onto their programme is satisfactory. Induction information is now presented to learners over a six- to nine-week period, and supported by an Orient Gold induction information pack. A further, recent addition, has been an equal opportunities support pack, providing learners with an informative introduction to the subject. Both these packs have sets of questions for learners to answer which reinforce the knowledge and understanding gained from reading the learning material.

### **Leadership and management**

94. Many of the systems to improve learners' experience have recently been introduced and are too new to have had a full impact on learners. Inspectors found variations in performance and quality on retail programmes between different areas of the country. The experience of learners new to the company's programmes has significantly improved since the previous inspection.

95. The self-assessment report for this area of learning identified some, but not all, of the strengths and weaknesses identified at the inspection. The grade at inspection matched that given in the self-assessment report.

**Hospitality, sport, leisure & travel****Grade 3**

Programmes inspected	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Work-based learning for young people	426	3

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

**Strengths**

- good support for individual learners
- good induction for learners and assessors

**Weaknesses**

- poor achievement rates
- insufficient monitoring of training

**Achievement and standards**

96. Poor achievement and retention rates were a significant weakness at the previous inspection. Achievement rates have remained poor. Significant changes have been made since the previous inspection, including more frequent visits and closer monitoring of learners' progress. Most learners recruited during the past year are making good progress. A significant number are close to completing the foundation modern apprenticeship within the identified timescale.

97. There has been a significant improvement in retention rates for learners on the foundation modern apprenticeship programme. During 2001-02, only 46 per cent remained on programme. Since the previous inspection, this has improved to 81 per cent. During 2001-02, 24 per cent of advanced modern apprentices were retained. This has improved to 90 per cent during 2002-03. These improvements have been achieved in the 11 months since the previous inspection.

98. Learners are employed in a variety of good hospitality establishments. They receive good experience and are able to perform the required job roles well. Many reach positions of responsibility, becoming deputy managers or supervisors. They achieve good skills, which are recognised by their employers and supervisors. Their employers also identify other benefits of training such as improved confidence and knowledge.

**Quality of education and training**

99. Learners receive good support from Orient Gold's assessors. They visit learners' workplaces at least every three weeks. The outcomes of the visits are well recorded and include good, measurable short-term targets which learners are expected to achieve

between visits. These targets are identified on new documents which are clear and which learners understand well. Copies of the documents are given to the workplace supervisors. Learners' optional units are chosen well after discussion with the assessor and supervisor. They reflect the learners' job role and support their career objectives. Several learners work towards extra NVQ units. This improves their understanding and knowledge. All learners interviewed had a good understanding and knowledge of their portfolios. They were able to identify the stage they are at and what they still needed to achieve to be successful. Assessors, when reviewing learners' responses to background knowledge questions, use good questioning techniques to ensure knowledge is accurate and that they understand the subject well.

100. Assessors introduce key skills training at an early stage in the learners' programmes. This is integrated well with the vocational training. Learners are taught well and take the external key skills tests at an early stage. Good use is made of workplace activities when producing the relevant evidence. The technical certificates for foundation modern apprentices are not achieved until late in the programme and therefore do not fully support the other units at the start of training.

101. Learners receive a good, thorough induction into their training. The company has revised its induction, and it now takes place over a 12-week period. All aspects of training are covered, including the requirements of the modern apprenticeship framework. The process actively involves all learners in evaluating their learning styles, reviewing their job roles and associating these with the NVQ units they are working towards. There is induction training on all aspects of health and safety, and on equal opportunities issues. The company has recently introduced a new equal opportunities work pack which is improving learners' understanding of the issues associated with equality. Learners' literacy and numeracy support needs are being identified through a new, comprehensive initial assessment process. The initial assessment process was identified as a weakness at the previous inspection. However, the new process has not had sufficient time to become established and it is too soon to judge its effectiveness. New assessors receive good support from the company and are accompanied by more experienced assessors at the start of their employment. Internal verifiers also accompany them at least once a month until they have achieved the assessors' awards. There is a good mentoring process for new staff, which provides a good introduction to their role.

## **Leadership and management**

102. There is insufficient monitoring of training. All training takes place in the learners' workplace. Whilst some practical training is given by Orient Gold's assessors, most is provided by workplace supervisors. The company does not fully monitor the quality of this training. Training needs are identified and recorded during assessors' visits. Supervisors are not always present and learners sometimes have to pass on the requirements to their supervisors. Assessors do not observe the training process and are only able to make judgements when learners are assessed. There is insufficient consideration of learners' previous experience when formulating the individual learning plan. Several learners have good knowledge and experience which was not fully

## ORIENT GOLD LTD REINSPECTION

considered when deciding either the order of the learning process or the pace of learning.

103. Following the previous inspection there have been some staffing changes. Some new assessors have been recruited with good, recent experience of the hospitality industry. All staff are set targets which relate to learners' achievement rates and recruitment. There is good development for staff. Development needs are identified during the annual appraisal and reviewed every six months. Both formal and informal communication between assessors is good. The area manager responsible for hospitality programmes arranges monthly meetings, both with individual assessors and with the whole team. These meetings are used to share best practice and for staff development, such as training on the learning style questionnaire for learners. Quality assurance of programmes is thorough and well planned. All learners receive an independent visit from an internal verifier while they are in training, and the observation of assessors is well planned.

104. Staff contributed to the production of the self-assessment report by completing various questionnaires and attending management meetings. The report did not fully recognise the full range of strengths and weaknesses identified by inspectors.