

# REINSPECTION REPORT

## **Kettering Borough Training Reinspection**

25 September 2003



ADULT LEARNING  
INSPECTORATE

## KETTERING BOROUGH TRAINING 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**

## **Kettering Borough Training Reinspection**

### **Contents**

#### **Summary**

Description of the provider	1
Scope of provision	1
About the reinspection	3
Overall judgement	4
Grades	4
Key findings	5

#### **Detailed reinspection findings**

Leadership and management	11
Equality of opportunity	12
Quality assurance	13
Construction	15
Engineering, technology & manufacturing	18
Business administration, management & professional	21
Hairdressing & beauty therapy	24
Health, social care & public services	27
Visual & performing arts & media	30
Foundation programmes	33

## REINSPECTION REPORT

### DESCRIPTION OF THE PROVIDER

1. Kettering Borough Training (KBT) was formed in 1982 as an autonomous business unit within Kettering Borough Council. The manager of KBT reports directly to the head of human resources at the council. KBT has offices and a training centre in buildings in the centre of Kettering close to Kettering Borough Council's offices. Other premises within Kettering are used by KBT, mostly for Entry to Employment (E2E) learners.
2. KBT offers work-based learning programmes for young people in land-based provision, construction trades, a range of engineering-related qualifications, business administration, customer care, hairdressing, health and social care, print occupations, and foundation courses. There are 180 learners engaged in advanced modern apprenticeships, foundation modern apprenticeships, national vocational qualifications (NVQs), Life Skills or E2E programmes.
3. KBT subcontracts many of its programmes to local colleges of further education and to private training providers. Programmes in health and social care, administration, customer service, key skills, foundation and level 1 construction are taught directly by KBT's staff.

### SCOPE OF PROVISION

#### Construction

4. There are 45 work-based learners in construction. Twenty of these are advanced modern apprentices, 18 are foundation modern apprentices, and the remainder are following a programme leading to a level 1 NVQ. All modern apprentices are employed with builders, in and around the Kettering area. Level 1 NVQ learners have work placements, many of which are with the council or with builders working on social housing projects. Level 1 NVQ learners receive off-the-job training by KBT staff at a specialist site close to KBT's offices. All other learners receive their off-the-job training from local colleges of further education, under subcontracting arrangements.

#### Engineering, technology & manufacturing

5. KBT offers advanced modern apprenticeships, foundation modern apprenticeships and NVQ training in mechanical engineering, welding, motor vehicle repair and electronic engineering. All learners are employed. Employers range from small local garages to a large marine engineering company. There are currently 25 learners, of whom 22 are advanced modern apprentices, two are foundation modern apprentices and one is an NVQ learner. Off-the-job training is subcontracted to two local colleges of further education, which provide background knowledge, practical, key skills and technical training.

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

6. Thirty learners are on programmes with KBT in business administration and accounting. The accounting courses are delivered by a local college of further education. Business administration learners attend sessions at KBT's training centre in Kettering for off-the-job training and help with portfolio-building. All advanced modern apprentices are employed. Some foundation modern apprentices are employed, the others have work placements which are arranged by KBT. A number of these are with Kettering Borough Council. Learners' progress is reviewed regularly by KBT's staff.

### **Hairdressing & beauty therapy**

7. KBT provides hairdressing and beauty therapy training in and around Kettering. Most learners are referred directly from employers. Most training takes place in the workplace and off-the-job training is subcontracted to two local colleges of further education which provide background knowledge, practical, and key skills training. Learners attend college for one day each week. There are 13 learners on hairdressing training programmes, one is an advanced modern apprentice in hairdressing, the rest are foundation modern apprentices. All learners are employed in hairdressing or beauty salons in the Kettering area. The foundation modern apprenticeship programme is planned to last 25 months for 16-18 year old learners and 10 months for 19-24 year old learners. The advanced modern apprenticeship is planned for 30 months for 16-18 year old learners and 24 months for 19-24 year old learners.

### **Health, social care & public services**

8. Twenty-four learners are on health and social care programmes, of whom two are on maternity leave. There are 11 foundation modern apprentices and 11 advanced modern apprentices. All learners are employed in residential care homes, nursing homes or residential homes for people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Training is provided by mentor/assessors at the training centre or in the workplace. The care assessors carry out assessments and progress reviews in the workplace. A formal review is carried out in the workplace by the training co-ordinator at least every 12 weeks. Internal verification is provided under contract from a consultant.

9. KBT no longer provides early years care and education training. All health and social care provision is for modern apprentices at advanced and foundation level in care.

## Visual & performing arts & media

10. KBT recruits learners for printing programmes through Connexions and by advertising in the local press. KBT carries out recruitment in conjunction with employers and all learners are employed. KBT subcontracts all printing training to three local colleges. There are 15 learners with nine employers. All 15 learners are modern apprentices. One is a foundation modern apprentice and 14 are advanced modern apprentices. Five learners are working for a pre-press origination NVQ, four are working on a mechanised print finishing and binding NVQ, five are working towards machine printing and there is one sign-maker. Subcontractors provide off-the-job training on a weekly day-release basis and college staff, who are occupationally competent and qualified assessors, visit the learners in the workplace to assess them. Key skills are taught and assessed at college and integrated with learners' specialisation. KBT has a special arrangement with one employer and the college for delivery of key skills training and the technical certificate in-company by visiting tutors. There are enough assessors and internal verifiers for all the learners' programmes.

## Foundation programmes

11. KBT works in partnership with the local Learning and Skills Council (LSC), Northamptonshire Lifelong Learning Service and Connexions to provide a Life Skills programme for young people aged 16-18, who are not in mainstream education, training and employment. There are 14 learners on the programme, six of whom joined recently under the E2E programme which is being introduced nationally to replace Life Skills. The training aims to develop motivation, self-confidence, personal effectiveness, vocational awareness, literacy, numeracy and work preparation skills in young people who have had negative experiences of learning, have barriers to learning, or who are unclear about their future career aims. Learners follow a core programme of group activities, individual additional training based on individual interests and external visits. Work experience is arranged for those learners who have progressed and are ready for the challenge. The length of the programme is flexible, depending on individual learner needs. Learners attend for 16 to 20 hours over four days each week. Most training takes place in dedicated training rooms that are rented from the lifelong learning service.

## ABOUT THE REINSPECTION

Number of inspectors	10
Number of inspection days	33
Number of learner interviews	92
Number of staff interviews	30
Number of employer interviews	34
Number of subcontractor interviews	13
Number of locations/sites/learning centres visited	1
Number of partner/external agency interviews	2

## OVERALL JUDGEMENT

12. At the previous inspection in March 2002, KBT's leadership and management were unsatisfactory. Foundation programmes, hairdressing and beauty therapy, engineering and construction programmes were also found to be unsatisfactory. Health and social care and business administration were satisfactory. Quality assurance was unsatisfactory, but equal opportunities provision was satisfactory. At the end of the reinspection process, the programmes in administration and accounting, health and social care and printing were found to be good and those in construction, hairdressing and beauty therapy and foundation were considered satisfactory. Leadership and management, including equal opportunities and quality assurance, were found to be satisfactory. However, engineering programmes were unsatisfactory.

## 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	3	3
Quality assurance	4	3

	Inspection	Reinspection
<b>Construction</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>
Contributory grades:		
Work-based learning for young people	4	3

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

	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



## KETTERING BOROUGH TRAINING REINSPECTION

	Inspection	Reinspection
<b>Hairdressing &amp; beauty therapy</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>
Contributory grades:		
Work-based learning for young people	4	3

	Inspection	Reinspection
<b>Health, social care &amp; public services</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>
Contributory grades:		
Work-based learning for young people	3	2

	Inspection	Reinspection
<b>Visual &amp; performing arts &amp; media</b>		<b>2</b>
Contributory grades:		
Work-based learning for young people		2

	Inspection	Reinspection
<b>Foundation programmes</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>
Contributory grades:		
Life Skills	4	3

## KEY FINDINGS

### Achievement and standards

13. **Retention and achievement rates have improved in almost all areas** since the previous inspection, **although they are still poor for engineering and construction modern apprentices.**

14. **Learners in printing achieve a number of useful additional qualifications.** They are supported by their employers and KBT in attending college courses to give them a very broad set of skills and knowledge.

15. **Progress for modern apprentices in construction is slow,** but has improved since the previous inspection. Similarly, health and social care learners make slow progress towards achieving their modern apprenticeship frameworks, although there has been some improvement since the previous inspection.

16. **Learners in engineering, printing and construction are developing a very good level of practical skills.** In printing, a learner who has been on the programme for six months is now producing magazines to a very good standard for professional organisations, with minimal supervision. In engineering, each learner works closely with a supervisor who

## KETTERING BOROUGH TRAINING REINSPECTION

gives them the opportunity to develop their practical skills. Construction learners are also given good opportunities to develop their skills in the workplace.

**17. KBT has an effective strategy for improving retention in health and social care programmes.** Potential learners are given the opportunity to try work-based learning for a period of time. They have an NVQ induction and complete portfolio work. At the end of the agreed period they decide whether to continue with the programme.

### 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
Construction	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
Business administration, management & professional	0	1	0	1	1	0	0	3
Retailing, customer service & transportation	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	2
Hairdressing & beauty therapy	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	3
Health, social care & public services	0	0	3	1	0	0	0	4
Foundation programmes	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>15</b>

Grades awarded to learning sessions

	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Total
Construction	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Business administration, management & professional	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Hairdressing & beauty therapy	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	2
Health, social care & public services	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	2
Foundation programmes	0	0	0	4	0	0	0	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>10</b>

**18. All learners experience teaching which is at least satisfactory.** In engineering and business administration, lessons are particularly well-planned. In hairdressing and beauty therapy lessons, key skills training is effectively integrated into the main course study. Training is well-resourced in engineering, business administration, hairdressing and beauty therapy and printing.

**19. All learners at KBT receive very good support.** KBT has introduced a system to identify learners who are at risk of leaving and to give them additional support. All learners have access to a series of grants from KBC to cover the cost of such things as books and tools. In engineering, one employer opens his workshops on Saturdays to give learners additional opportunities to develop their skills. Assessments in care are very flexible to meet the needs of the learner and the employer. Similarly, in administration programmes, the training co-ordinator will visit the learner at a time most convenient to the learner.

**20.** Progress reviews have improved since the previous inspection and are now

satisfactory. They are timed to fit in with learners' working arrangements. In some cases, they take place outside of normal office hours. Reviews take place at least every 12 weeks, but can be more frequent to accommodate the needs of the learner. **However, in engineering and health and social care, employers are not sufficiently involved.**

21. Internal verification is satisfactory in most programmes. **However, in mechanical engineering the planning is poor and in welding, portfolios are verified only on completion of the course.**

22. **Employers are particularly well involved in the printing programme.** They are all closely involved in progress reviews and are very supportive of off-the-job training. They provide opportunities for learners to gain additional skills. In one case, the employer has arranged for a learner to spend some time with other companies to learn different skills.

23. **The planning of modern apprenticeship training in construction is poor.** Short-term plans are effective, but longer-term plans are often not clear to the learner. Learners and employers are often confused about learners' completion dates.

24. **Foundation programmes do not have sufficient training in numeracy and literacy.** There is no diagnostic testing to determine learners' priorities and planning is weak. Learners' progress in numeracy and literacy is not monitored sufficiently. Learners in the other programmes receive appropriate support for identified literacy and numeracy needs.

## Leadership and management

25. **Communications within KBT are very good.** There are regular staff meetings which are well recorded. Actions are clearly identified, together with the person responsible, and are effectively monitored to ensure completion. Communications with Kettering Borough Council are frequent and effective.

26. **Good management initiatives improve the quality of training.** Since the previous inspection, a quality assurance framework has been designed and implemented. Monitoring of the quality of subcontractors has been improved, with clear service level agreements. KBT has changed the subcontractor in one area. KBT has introduced a red, amber, green system to identify those learners at risk of leaving and to give additional support where the need is identified. This is being used effectively by staff.

27. **Equality of opportunity is not promoted sufficiently** in the workplace. KBT does not keep copies of employers' equal opportunities policies and does not monitor their implementation effectively. References to equality of opportunity at progress reviews are very brief and generally cover only the learners' rights, not the broader equality of opportunity issues.

## KETTERING BOROUGH TRAINING REINSPECTION

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

### **Leadership and management**

#### **Strengths**

- very effective communications
- good management initiatives to improve the training provision
- good strategy to increase participation of minority ethnic groups

#### **Weaknesses**

- insufficient monitoring and promotion of equality of opportunity in the workplace

### **Construction**

#### **Strengths**

- good skills development in the workplace
- thorough progress reviews for level 1 NVQ learners
- good support for learners

#### **Weaknesses**

- poor retention rates for modern apprentices
- slow progress for modern apprentices
- weak planning of training in modern apprenticeships

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

#### **Strengths**

- good off-the-job training
- good development of learners' practical skills
- effective support for learners

#### **Weaknesses**

- poor retention and achievement rates on modern apprenticeship programmes
- insufficient co-ordination of on- and off-the-job training
- weak internal verification in mechanical engineering
- insufficient employer involvement in progress reviews

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

### **Strengths**

- good completion rates on modern apprenticeship programmes
- good retention rates
- good assessment practices
- very good level of support for learners

### **Weaknesses**

- insufficient direct observation evidence in administration learners' portfolios
- weak initial assessment

## **Hairdressing & beauty therapy**

### **Strengths**

- good completion rates for foundation modern apprentices
- good off-the-job training facilities
- good support for work-placement providers

### **Weaknesses**

- poor practice by one subcontractor

## **Health, social care & public services**

### **Strengths**

- good integration of key skills with vocational training
- effective strategy for improving retention
- excellent support for learners

### **Weaknesses**

- insufficient employer involvement in learners' progress reviews

## **Visual & performing arts & media**

### **Strengths**

- good achievement of additional qualifications
- particularly good employer involvement in the learning process
- good support for learners

### **Weaknesses**

- poor work-based assessment

## **Foundation programmes**

### **Strengths**

- wide range of learning activities
- good training accommodation
- good support for learners

### **Weaknesses**

- insufficient literacy and numeracy training
- insufficiently clear learning objectives in some training sessions
- poor target-setting

## DETAILED REINSPECTION FINDINGS

### LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

**Grade 3**

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

#### **Strengths**

- very effective communications
- good management initiatives to improve the training provision
- good strategy to increase participation of minority ethnic groups

#### **Weaknesses**

- insufficient monitoring and promotion of equality of opportunity in the workplace

28. KBT operates as a department within the human resources division of Kettering Borough Council. The manager of KBT reports to the head of human resources. Currently this post is vacant and the manager is reporting directly to the deputy chief executive. A newly created deputy manager post within KBT is currently vacant. There are eight other full-time staff, three part-time staff and five consultants. Three posts are currently vacant, two for training co-ordinators and one for an E2E trainer.

29. KBT's management produces an annual business plan to meet local training needs. The business plan contributes to the borough council's strategic objectives and is aligned with them. This ensures a link with local community and commercial needs. KBT has effective links with the council's aims to widen participation and inclusion. Business planning includes the setting of targets relating to learner performance. These targets are demanding and assigned to staff, as part of their development plans. Staff are fully aware of their targets and their performance in achieving them.

30. KBT has good management initiatives to improve the training provision. Quality assurance procedures have been thoroughly reviewed. The provider had increased its work to monitor the quality of subcontracted provision, by improved negotiated service level agreements and by better enforcement of those agreements. It has introduced a system for monitoring learners' progress and identifying those who are not making the expected progress. There are good initiatives to widen participation. Other activities include the provision of transport for some learners to attend off-the-job training. Subcontractors have been changed where problems have been identified. Although there are still some significant weaknesses, there have been improvements in all areas of learning and, in some areas, significant improvements.

31. Communications are good. There are regular staff meetings. These cover all aspects of the provision and are well recorded. Minutes are clear and are supported by an additional review of actions to be completed at the end of each section of the

## KETTERING BOROUGH TRAINING REINSPECTION

minutes. Performance against actions is monitored at subsequent meetings. There are effective communications at all levels within KBT, with partner organisations and the borough council. Management is responsive to staff requests for additional information or improvements to operating practices.

32. The management information system is satisfactory. KBT uses a locally produced database which holds learners' records from 1997. The database holds all key learner information; however, it does not record unit achievement or partial progress and KBT had difficulty providing this information for some inspectors. The data are not formally validated or audited. The database is used to produce some routine performance reports and other reports on demand. However, KBT had difficulty providing information on milestone achievement and progress made in one area of learning.

33. KBT is required to be self-sufficient. Historically, Kettering Borough Council has provided financial support on occasion, but KBT is self-sufficient and has returned a profit for the past seven years.

34. Staff are formally appraised annually, as part of the borough council appraisal and development process. The appraisal process is clear and understood by all staff. Training and development needs are discussed and recorded. KBT has a clear approach to staff development, linking all staff development to its strategic objectives. Staff are appropriately qualified.

35. KBT manages support for identified literacy and numeracy needs satisfactorily. Learners receive appropriate levels of support.

### **Equality of opportunity**

### **Contributory grade 3**

36. KBT has a good strategy to increase the level of participation by minority ethnic groups. KBT monitors the proportion of minority ethnic learners and identified that it was lower than the proportion within the Kettering community as a whole. KBT had productive talks with young people from minority ethnic groups about the best way to encourage them to become involved in education and training. An advertising campaign was carried out on a local radio station, targeting this client group. The number of learners from minority ethnic groups has increased from 1.2 per cent to 3.5 per cent during the past year. The percentage of people in the Kettering area from minority ethnic groups is 1.3 per cent. KBT is now actively working with employers to increase the number of work-placement opportunities for minority ethnic learners.

37. KBT has an appropriate range of equal opportunities policies which are issued to learners, but their recollection of this is poor. During their induction all learners receive information about their rights and responsibilities, but this is dealt with very briefly and is not re-emphasised during their programmes.

38. KBT is aware of, and complies with, all the relevant equal opportunities legislation. KBT monitors the ethnicity of its learners, but there is insufficient monitoring of the numbers of learners from the deprived areas of Kettering.



39. All areas of the KBT premises used by learners are easily accessible to wheelchair users. There is a toilet for learners and staff with disabilities. There are height-adjustable computer desks, but no large-screen computers and no large keyboards. KBT has a contract with a signer to help learners with hearing impairments. All of the information available to the public is in English, although KBT has access to the council's translation service for speakers of other languages. KBT contact this service on behalf of any enquirers who do not speak English.

40. All staff have undergone some basic training in equal opportunities and this has been updated at regular intervals. A range of posters is on display at the KBT premises explaining, for example, what learners must do if they feel that they have been the victim of racism or sexual harassment. However, these are of a general nature and are not specific to KBT learners.

41. KBT does not monitor and promote equality of opportunity in the workplace sufficiently. When a new employer is used by KBT, staff ask the employer if there is an equal opportunities policy in place, but they do not retain a copy of this for reference. Smaller employers that do not have an equal opportunities policy agree to implement KBT's equal opportunities policy. However, there is no monitoring of its implementation. During progress reviews in the workplace learners are asked they feel that they are being treated fairly by the employer and if they are being bullied or harassed. There is no promotion of the wider aspects of equality opportunity, such as responsibilities towards other learners. A number of employers have inappropriate images displayed on walls. This is not challenged by KBT.

## Quality assurance

## Contributory grade 3

42. Since the previous inspection, KBT has thoroughly reviewed the quality assurance process and has produced a new quality assurance manual. This is well structured and contains clear procedures which cover all aspects of the provision. The range of related documents is clear and subject to effective configuration control. The processes were produced over a period with full staff involvement. Staff are aware of the procedures and have been trained in their use. The new procedures, however, have not been in place long enough to have had a full effect on the training provision.

43. Since the previous inspection, KBT has improved the monitoring of the quality of subcontracted provision. Each subcontractor has signed a service level agreement. These are comprehensive and have a separate annexe for quality assurance. KBT has copies of reports from internal and external audits, profiles of lesson observation grades, schemes of work, staff curriculum vitae and a range of other quality assurance material. Some of this material has been used by KBT to work with the subcontractor to improve the provision. KBT maintains a communications log which records informal contact with subcontractors. Significant progress has been made in the monitoring of subcontractors since the previous inspection. KBT has changed subcontractors where the provision was not to a satisfactory standard. There are, however, still some weaknesses in the quality of subcontracted provision, as identified by inspectors, within the areas of learning.

## KETTERING BOROUGH TRAINING REINSPECTION

44. Internal verification by KBT is satisfactory. There are clear records and sampling plans. A consultant provides advice and guidance. There is currently no specific lead internal verifier, but staff work together to provide this function. One member of staff is being developed to become the lead internal verifier. There are regular standardisation meetings for sharing good practice. These meetings are clearly recorded and KBT works effectively to minimise the effect of staff working with different awarding bodies. Internal verification by subcontractors is not always effective.

45. Feedback is gained from learners during reviews and also by questionnaires. Feedback is also gained from employers and external agencies. All feedback is effectively analysed and used to contribute to the self-assessment report and development plans.

46. Paperwork is audited on an irregular basis. Some forms, for example those for learners' progress reviews, are subject to a 100 per cent audit by the manager. This audit is subjective and more focused on learner progress than on the quality and completeness of the form. The most recent paperwork audits were in 2000 for learner files and 2002 for employer files. One of the new quality assurance procedures is for formal and structured audits. The process is expected to start in October 2003.

47. The self-assessment process is thorough and involves all members of staff. The report matched many of the inspector's findings in terms of strengths and weaknesses.

## AREAS OF LEARNING

### Construction

Grade 3

Programmes inspected	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Work-based learning for young people	45	3

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

### Strengths

- good skills development in the workplace
- thorough progress reviews for level 1 NVQ learners
- good support for learners

### Weaknesses

- poor retention rates for modern apprentices
- slow progress for modern apprentices
- weak planning of training in modern apprenticeships

### Achievement and standards

48. The retention rate for modern apprentices is poor. Over half of the modern apprentices up to 2001-02 left the programme before the planned completion date. There has been no improvement for advanced modern apprentices and only a slight improvement is possible for foundation modern apprentices if all of those in learning remain. The retention rate for level 1 NVQ learners is satisfactory and improving. The rate of achievement of NVQ units has improved significantly, as has the number of key skills qualifications gained. The improvement has been most marked in the past six months. The rate of achievement for the level 1 NVQ learners is satisfactory. However, there has been insufficient improvement in the number of completed modern apprenticeship frameworks.

49. Progress is still slow. Forty-two per cent of those still in learning have exceeded the expected end dates of their programmes. However, they are still being fully supported by the provider. One learner is starting the fourth year of training for a brickwork advanced modern apprenticeship, having completed only a small part of the level 3 NVQ. The provider has recently begun closer monitoring of progress towards individual units and additional qualifications. This, and the resulting short-term progress targets, has helped to increase the rate of progress.

50. Learners develop good skills in the workplace. They benefit from their work placements and employment with good companies. Most companies employ fewer

## KETTERING BOROUGH TRAINING REINSPECTION

than five people. Learners have their activities in the workplace well organised to help ensure that they cover a good range of activities. Employers often assist with the collection of evidence, signing witness testimony forms and taking photographs of learners' work. One employer has a qualified assessor as a member of staff.

51. Effective actions are being taken to improve retention and achievement rates. KBT has introduced a good system of identifying those learners who are likely to leave their programme before completion, or who are making slow progress. For these learners the frequency of progress reviews is increased from 12 weeks to four weeks. Additional support is given to the learners. Individual cases are quickly followed up to prevent learners leaving or being dismissed.

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

52. Progress reviews for NVQ learners are thorough. Reviews, which occur every four weeks, consider progress towards literacy and numeracy targets and set further challenging targets for achievement. When learners are on work placement, supervisors fully contribute to the review process, giving detailed reports on learners' activities. The portfolios which learners develop on placement are detailed, with good written reports and photographs of tasks carried out. Those learners interviewed are proud of these records of their training.

53. Support for learners with KBT is good. The previous inspection showed retention rates to be unsatisfactory. KBT has designed and implemented effective strategies to alert staff to learners at risk of leaving, with each showing as red, amber or green according to the degree of risk. Learners are visited monthly, when good pastoral support is arranged. Many learners are given extra time at work to help them complete their college assignments or work on their portfolios. One learner who was away from work for three months because of ill health was provided with background knowledge work from college and was visited by KBT's staff to monitor progress and provide support.

54. Work placements for NVQ learners are with the local authority, or builders operating in the area. Learners help with the groundwork and foundation stages of low-cost housing developments. The optimum time for learners to attend the work placement sites is negotiated between KBT and the construction contractor to ensure that the learners gain the maximum benefit from the placement. Some learners have progressed to foundation modern apprenticeships, or found full-time employment in construction after completing the level 1 NVQ qualification. Modern apprentices often work with minimal supervision, completing work to very good standards.

55. Learning resources are satisfactory. There has been some improvement of facilities for the NVQ learners, although the room for teaching background knowledge is still inadequate to teach more than three learners at a time. It has no overhead projector, making the effective teaching of background knowledge difficult. Facilities for practical teaching have improved since the previous inspection and resources at the

subcontracted colleges are also satisfactory.

56. Progress reviews for modern apprentices are satisfactory. They concentrate mainly on short-term targets, but do not all define longer-term goals. Many learners are unclear of the details of their programme and are also unclear about the expected completion date.

57. Literacy and numeracy support for all learners is satisfactory. They are given an initial assessment of their needs and a part-time tutor helps with their literacy and numeracy development. The delivery is effective, but recording of progress is weak.

58. The planning of learning for modern apprentices is weak. Learners and employers often do not fully understand the details of the individual learning plan and many are unclear about the duration or content of their programmes. Literacy and numeracy needs are not recorded on learning plans and the achievement dates for NVQ units are identical, being the end of the funding period. Some of the subcontracted college staff are unclear about details of the modern apprenticeship programme and who among the learners are modern apprentices.

## **Leadership and management**

59. The leadership and management of construction are satisfactory. Strategies have been introduced to manage the subcontracted colleges more effectively and these strategies are starting to take effect. Copies of external verifier reports and lesson observation records are forwarded to KBT, and staff are invited to attend course team meetings at the nearest college. Many of the initiatives, however, are new and have not yet affected learners' experience of the training.

60. Modern apprentices' progress reviews, which were identified as a weakness at the previous inspection, have improved and are now satisfactory, although they still do not adequately check learners' understanding of equal opportunities. Staff development opportunities are frequently arranged. One member of staff achieved his assessor qualification within his first year and is working towards specific training qualifications. Internal verification of assessment, and communications between the provider, employers and colleges, are also satisfactory.

**Engineering, technology & manufacturing****Grade 4**

Programmes inspected	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Work-based learning for young people	25	4

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

**Strengths**

- good off-the-job training
- good development of learners' practical skills
- effective support for learners

**Weaknesses**

- poor retention and achievement rates on modern apprenticeship programmes
- insufficient co-ordination of on- and off-the-job training
- weak internal verification in mechanical engineering
- insufficient employer involvement in progress reviews

**Achievement and standards**

61. Retention and achievement rates are poor for advanced modern apprentices. Since the previous inspection, workplace assessments have been more frequent to try to improve the situation. KBT has also introduced an early-warning system to identify those learners who are not making sufficient progress towards completion of their framework or NVQs. It is too early to determine how much these measures will affect the retention and achievement rates. In 2002 there were three starters in welding. Of these, two are still in learning. There are insufficient reliable data and evidence to show where improvements have been made. Learners in engineering acquire very good levels of practical skills.

**Quality of education and training**

62. Off-the-job training is good. Background knowledge and practical sessions are well planned and structured to make good use of resources. Trainers are well qualified in their relevant occupational areas and have extensive industrial experience. The mechanical and welding workshops are well equipped with a wide range of tools and machinery. The workshops are spacious and provide good working conditions for learners. There are good motor vehicle resources, which include computer-based engine diagnostic equipment for learners to develop their fault-finding skills. One subcontracting college has a wide range of light vehicles and a heavy vehicle for learners to carry out practical skills assignments towards their technical certificate. However, some of the light vehicles are in poor condition and do not reflect current vehicle

systems. Learners are given course timetables which identify background knowledge and practical sessions, but these do not give the subject area to be covered during each session.

63. Learners' practical skills are well developed. Many learners have a carefully selected, named supervisor, other learners work within a team of qualified engineers. Learners are introduced gradually to engineering by carrying out basic engineering tasks, such as marking out and cutting materials for manufacture, or motor vehicle routine servicing. Supervisors are very experienced and give learners clear explanations and thoroughly demonstrate the relevant practical skills. They are very patient with learners at this early stage of their training. Learners quickly acquire skills to a commercial standard and manufacture good-quality products. They are allowed to work without direct supervision when appropriate and are encouraged to work directly with customers at an early stage of their training. Since the previous inspection, the development of key skills training has improved and learners on welding programmes are now making good progress.

64. Learners are well supported. Employers are enthusiastic about training and give good support and encouragement to their learners. Some employers provide appropriate time and suitable rooms during the day for learners to complete their written work or portfolio evidence. One employer has changed a production workshop into a training environment to encourage learners to progress more quickly. This employer also allows learners to attend the workplace on a Saturday to receive additional training and practise their welding skills. Learners can work in another employer's workplace if they cannot collect suitable evidence from their own. One employer assists its learners financially, by providing them with a basic tool kit for measuring, marking out and cutting sheet metal materials. Support is given by KBT and subcontractors to learners with literacy, numeracy and key skills needs.

65. Most employers strictly reinforce health and safety practice for learners in the workplace. However, for one motor vehicle learner, the workshop floor was cluttered with electric cables, air hoses, tools and equipment and the workplace supervisor did not sufficiently promote safety by wearing appropriate safety footwear.

66. Assessment practice in the workplace is satisfactory. Since the previous inspection, the assessment process has improved. There are now effective arrangements for the assessment of motor vehicle learners. Learners can now request assessment. Learners or employers contact assessors when suitable work is available for assessment. The assessment of learners on welding programmes is planned every month. Observation records of assessment are written clearly and give good feedback to learners about their performance. Learners sign the report and receive a copy for their portfolios. The assessment practice for portfolios is inconsistent. Portfolios are mostly satisfactory, but some portfolio evidence is not signed by either a workplace witness or assessor.

67. All learners are given an initial assessment to determine their individual needs. Their career objectives are determined and an appropriate programme is decided upon. This includes numeracy and literacy and support, which is satisfactory.



## KETTERING BOROUGH TRAINING REINSPECTION

68. On- and off-the-job training are not co-ordinated sufficiently. Employers are not provided with off-the-job training course timetables to enable them to effectively link work activities with their learners' programmes. Since the previous inspection, the provider has produced a comprehensive employer's guide to work-based learning, but some employers and work-based supervisors still do not fully understand the structure and NVQ evidence requirements.

69. Internal verification is weak for mechanical engineering learners. There is insufficient planning for sampling portfolios or observing the assessment process. Most welding portfolios are only internally verified on completion of the programme. Records are kept of those portfolios verified, but these are difficult to audit. There are not enough records of assessors being observed and there is no differentiation for assessors who are inexperienced. A recent awarding body external verifier visit resulted in a poor grade for internal verification. There is an action plan for improvement.

70. Employers are not sufficiently involved in progress reviews. Training co-ordinators visit learners in the workplace at least every 12 weeks for progress reviews, more frequently for learners whose progress is slower than expected. Target-setting has improved since the previous inspection. Many employers, however, are not sufficiently involved in the process. They are not always present during discussions and are often only required to sign a copy of the report. Some review forms are not signed by the employer and others record that an employer was not present during the progress review.

### **Leadership and management**

71. The management of engineering programmes has improved since the previous inspection and KBT has succeeded in resolving most of the weaknesses identified. The monitoring of subcontractor colleges is better, although there are still some issues which have not been fully resolved. Internal verification is weak for mechanical engineering, the co-ordination of on- and off-the-job training is poor, employers are not sufficiently involved in progress reviews, and retention and achievement rates are poor for modern apprentices.



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

Programmes inspected	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Work-based learning for young people	30	2

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

**Strengths**

- good completion rates on modern apprenticeship programmes
- good retention rates
- good assessment practices
- very good level of support for learners

**Weaknesses**

- insufficient direct observation evidence in administration learners' portfolios
- weak initial assessment

**Achievement and standards**

72. Achievement levels are good on modern apprenticeship programmes. Achievement rates are currently similar to those at the previous inspection, but several learners are very close to successfully completing their frameworks.

73. Retention rates are good. Overall, retention rates have risen from below 70 per cent to above 80 per cent. Several learners have made significant progress. A good proportion of learners has moved from a preparation for work programme to modern apprenticeship programmes. These learners have gained in confidence and skills as a result of the programme provided by KBT and the employers. They are now valued employees.

**Quality of education and training**

74. Training is now better planned to meet individual needs. The reorganisation of off-the-job training for administration learners has improved their focus in training and makes better use of their time. Regular, individual progress reviews are now effective. Every month a group training session is given appropriate to the NVQ and key skills requirements. Recent sessions have focused on mail merge, data protection and equal opportunities. For three out of every four weeks, one hour of this time is spent on individual support sessions at KBT with the tutor/assessor, in personal coaching and portfolio-building.

75. Off-the-job training in administration is provided in a pleasant training room at KBT's

## KETTERING BOROUGH TRAINING REINSPECTION

main premises. There is good access for wheelchair users. Learners are able to use industry-standard computers with an appropriate range of up-to-date software. Staff are appropriately qualified.

76. KBT now has good assessment practices. Assessment and internal verification in administration are carried out by KBT's staff. Feedback to learners is encouraging and constructive. Internal verification is thorough and well planned. However, not enough administration portfolios show evidence drawn from direct observation. Too much evidence is drawn from statements made by the learners in response to tasks set by trainers. The portfolios, nevertheless, display good work by the learners. In accounting, assessment and internal verification carried out by a private training provider, and a local college of further education.

77. Progress reviews are now more focused. Mentoring and action-planning are used to set effective short-and longer-term targets. Trainers meet with learners every one or two weeks to review progress towards targets set at earlier reviews and to update the individual learning plans.

78. Learners have a KBT co-ordinator assigned to review their progress in the workplace. This is carried out at least once every 12 weeks, or more frequently if required. Employers are formally involved at this time and are required to check the progress of the learner and sign the review documents. Sometimes the documents are not signed.

79. Learners are well supported. They are able to drop into KBT's main training centre, or telephone at any time to discuss personal and learning issues with their co-ordinator. If a learner cannot call during work time, the training co-ordinator will make arrangements to see the learner outside normal office hours. In conjunction with KBT's manager, the administration trainer has reorganised the use of time during off-the-job learning sessions to ensure that every learner has one hour of individual time with her each week, for three out of every four weeks, to review progress and discuss problems.

80. Most accounting learners attend a local college of further education with NVQ level 4 learners, half a day each week for 46 weeks. Training is provided by a private organisation. The rest of the learners attend college for one day each week during term time. All learners have access to KBT's training co-ordinators when the college is closed. There has been an improvement in training in this area, demonstrated by a good pass rate for the vocational qualification.

81. Initial assessment remains weak. In the administration programme learners are set some tasks to test their spelling, grammar and computer skills. This testing contributes to an assessment of their starting point in learning and indicates their likely level of achievement and learning support needs. Learners are asked to assess their existing levels of ability in specific administrative skills. There is the possibility of inaccurate diagnosis in this process. The support that learners receive in literacy and numeracy is satisfactory.

## **Leadership and management**

82. Regular staff meetings are held to discuss training and development issues. These are well minuted, with actions planned and reviewed at subsequent meetings. Close attention is given to individual learners' progress at these meetings. However, there is insufficient sharing of good practice, although some recent improvements have been made to the collection of evidence for portfolios in administration. A good example by the care trainers has now been adopted, with much greater cross-referencing of evidence within portfolios.

**Hairdressing & beauty therapy****Grade 3**

Programmes inspected	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Work-based learning for young people	13	3

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

**Strengths**

- good completion rates for foundation modern apprentices
- good off-the-job training facilities
- good support for work-placement providers

**Weaknesses**

- poor practice by one subcontractor

**Achievement and standards**

83. Achievement rates by foundation modern apprentices are good. Of 11 learners who started in 2000-01, six completed the full modern apprenticeship framework. Advanced modern apprentices also make good progress. Of three who started in 1999-2000, two are on target to complete the framework in October 2003. Historically, completion rates of full frameworks are poor and therefore this is a significant improvement for KBT. The provider no longer offers individual NVQs, but historical achievements for these qualifications are satisfactory.

84. Learners acquire satisfactory practical skills. They receive individual coaching in the workplace and group activities with the off-the-job training subcontractor. Most learners produce practical work to the standard expected of them. Portfolios and standards of written work all contain the necessary information to meet the awarding body requirements and are generally satisfactory.

**Quality of education and training**

85. Off-the-job training facilities are good. The hairdressing salon is well designed and equipped with all the latest fixtures and fittings and is a good realistic working environment. This training centre is in a prime location in a town centre, which is easy to access for all learners and clients. All learners' work placements are satisfactory, with up-to-date equipment.

86. Workplacement providers and employers are well supported. Problems are resolved quickly and efficiently by KBT. Providers and employers are kept informed of learners' progress and KBT is willing to be flexible to ensure the smooth operation of learners'

programmes. One new employer recently took over a salon which had an existing learner. The employer was given support by KBT to aid the transition period for both learner and employer.

87. At the beginning of their programme learners are invited for a trial period of three months, which enables them to evaluate their suitability for the hairdressing industry. If, after this trial period, they want to join a hairdressing training programme they receive an induction, which takes place in their workplace. Learners are provided with information about equal opportunities, health and safety and the structure of their NVQ. This is supported by an induction handbook which is specific to the hairdressing qualification. Learners have an initial assessment, which includes a diagnostic assessment of their literacy and numeracy skills. Most learners' support needs are appropriately identified and they are all working at an appropriate level. Learners who need it receive appropriate support for numeracy and literacy skills.

88. The teaching of key skills is satisfactory. There is a clear understanding of key skills requirements by assessors and learners. Assessors frequently link learners' key skills with their vocational assessments. Learners are clear about how key skills can be used in the workplace. They have a range of diverse evidence in their key skills portfolios, which is satisfactorily presented and vocationally relevant to the hairdressing industry. Tutors use their experience in the hairdressing industry to illustrate to learners where key skills are required in the workplace.

89. Learners receive satisfactory pastoral support from KBT's staff, who provide support and advice to learners experiencing problems in the workplace. KBT's staff create a supportive, friendly learning environment, and learners develop their skills with confidence.

90. Planning for off-the-job training is satisfactory. There is a weekly off-the-job learning plan, which is used by the trainers. However, some learners and employers do not get a copy of this plan and training in the workplace is not always well co-ordinated with off-the-job training. Some assessment practices are poor. Learners' portfolios of evidence and assessment logbooks are kept by a subcontractor and learners are not allowed to take them home or into the workplace.

91. One subcontractor has poor practices and procedures. Targets in learners' personal action plans are inadequate. In some cases, personal actions identified in previous progress reviews were not recorded or discussed in the next review. Feedback, when used, is brief with insufficient constructive comments or praise. Accreditation of prior learning is poor. Most learners have worked in the hairdressing industry in a part-time capacity before starting their programme. Learners are not given accreditation for skills acquired during this period. There is no vocational initial assessment to identify prior achievements. In one case, a learner had worked in the industry for two and a half years and still had to start her programme at the basic level.

## **Leadership and management**

92. Management initiatives have improved the training provision. For example, KBT has appointed a travelling assessor who visits all learners in the workplace every two weeks. Employers and learners agree that this has improved the opportunities for work-based assessment. The internal verification is satisfactory. Verification takes place regularly, visits are planned in advance, and reports are produced which cover most aspects of the assessment process. KBT has a long-term sampling plan, which involves all assessors, including work-based, and a wide range of evidence. Internal verifiers observe assessors frequently and give useful feedback to support the assessor. Assessors meet regularly to standardise assessment procedures. Internal verification can be monitored through learners' portfolios and is standardised among the different training centres and salons.

**Health, social care & public services****Grade 2**

Programmes inspected	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Work-based learning for young people	24	2

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

**Strengths**

- good integration of key skills with vocational training
- effective strategy for improving retention
- excellent support for learners

**Weaknesses**

- insufficient employer involvement in learners' progress reviews

**Achievement and standards**

93. Achievement rates have improved slightly for foundation and advanced modern apprentices. Of the 15 learners who left the modern apprenticeship programme between 1998 and 2002, 20 per cent completed their advanced modern apprenticeships. Since the previous inspection, two learners have completed their foundation modern apprenticeship framework, which is 6 per cent of leavers for that period. This slow progress in achievement has been acknowledged in the self-assessment report and remains a concern for KBT. However, there are some indications of an improvement. Six learners have made good progress and three have almost completed the advanced modern apprenticeship framework.

**Quality of education and training**

94. Every learner is assigned a trainer who acts as a mentor/assessor, providing individual support either at the training centre or in the workplace. Many learners see their trainer every week. Short-term target-setting is used effectively to help learners' progress with the key skills and vocational work, which are cross-referenced.

95. Key skills training is well integrated with the vocational element of learners' programmes and this was recognised by KBT in its self-assessment report. An initial assessment determines the level of training needed by each learner to achieve key skills and the learner's preferred learning style. Trainers teach key skills by using realistic scenarios drawn from the workplace. For example, learners were asked to carry out a survey of residents' wishes with regard to leisure activities, which incorporated poster design and production, report writing, and interviewing. They used computers to produce reports, including graphics, and a range of methods to demonstrate application

## KETTERING BOROUGH TRAINING REINSPECTION

of number. Additional support is available for learners requiring specialist help and for some learners who are required to sit formal tests, alternative arrangements have been made to help them overcome their fear of sitting examinations. Appropriate help with literacy and numeracy needs is also available for those learners requiring it.

96. Learning resources are satisfactory. The learners appreciate having a quiet room to use at the training centre. They have access to books, journals, handouts, workbooks and computers. These are available at the centre, or can be borrowed by the learner for home use. Learners are encouraged to research projects for their NVQ and key skills on the internet. Workbooks are available for all key skills and most NVQ units. Staff are appropriately qualified. One work-based assessor is working towards assessor/adviser qualifications and is involved in the assessment and observation of her staff member on the programme.

97. All assessments and observations are carried out in the workplace by KBT's staff. Two assessors are both employed for seven hours each week to carry out assessments and provide support and mentoring to 22 learners on the programme and new referrals on a trial period. Currently, eight additional learners under the early leavers strategy also receive some level of additional support/mentoring. Some observations and assessment sessions do not take place as arranged, because of work restrictions.

98. The introduction of an early leavers' strategy has been effective in improving retention rates. All learners are employed in the independent care sector and are referred to the programme by their employer. During a one-month trial period, they are invited to attend taster sessions and given tasks to complete that are relevant to their NVQ. The cost is covered by KBT until the learners decide whether or not they want to continue with the programme. During the past 12 months, 26 employees have been referred to KBT, of whom eight are about to start on the programme.

99. KBT has a well-planned induction process which makes learners aware of their roles and responsibilities. Induction training in the workplace is used to provide evidence for the NVQ portfolios. Trainers have worked closely with some employers to advise on appropriate workplace induction training which meets national guidelines.

100. Prior learning is used well to determine what level of programme a learner should follow. Learners' qualifications, experience and current job roles are taken into account and trainers advise learners which vocational programme is most suitable to their work setting. Learners are exempted from part or all key skills training if they can provide evidence of achievement within accepted timescales. Informal assessment includes discussions with the learner and observation of his/her ability to complete written tasks. Trainers encourage learners to draw on their personal and work experience to develop their understanding in training sessions. Learners appreciate the link between training and work practice and feel more confident in their work. Most of the learners on the programme intend to continue with their learning.

101. Off-the-job training is flexible, allowing learners to attend at different times and dates to accommodate shift working. Assessments and observations are carried out in



the workplace and are individually arranged through the tutorial system. Some are arranged for evenings and weekends to suit the shift patterns and the needs of the residential home.

102. KBT provides excellent support for learners. The staff are enthusiastic and encouraging. Learners speak highly of the support they receive from the training staff. They feel that staff are knowledgeable, approachable and interested in them as individuals. Learners appreciate the flexibility of the trainers in meeting with them during evenings and weekends. Additional learning materials are provided for learners who cannot attend off-the-job training, and workbooks are provided to guide learners through specific unit requirements. Two learners with dyslexia have been given additional support. Their ability to provide evidence for their NVQ portfolios has continued to improve.

103. The formal progress review process has been used to check any concerns with learners. This process has been successful in dealing with one learner's dissatisfaction with the assessment arrangements.

104. Most employers do not take part in the progress review process. Trainers review progress with learners at each training and support session and this is recorded on the feedback/contact sheet. Formal reviews are held every 12 weeks between the learner and the training co-ordinator. The employer does not sign the review form or comment on progress made on the programme.

### **Leadership and management**

105. Intense activity has taken place since the previous inspection, to help slow achievers to complete their programmes. An additional assessor has been employed, to double the available hours. The training co-ordinator and the two assessors meet every two months to share information about individual learners' progress and agree actions to be taken. Improved monitoring of targets and the development of more learning materials based on preferred learning styles has increased learners' motivation to complete their programmes.

**Visual & performing arts & media****Grade 2**

Programmes inspected	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Work-based learning for young people	15	2

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

**Strengths**

- good achievement of additional qualifications
- particularly good employer involvement in the learning process
- good support for learners

**Weaknesses**

- poor work-based assessment

**Achievement and standards**

106. Achievement and retention rates are satisfactory and both are showing an improving trend. In 1997-98 they were both 50 per cent; this figure has increased to 70 per cent for 2000-01.

107. All learners have formal, off-the-job training which leads to the achievement of additional level 2 and level 3 vocational qualifications which are not a requirement of the modern apprenticeship. One learner has gained additional qualifications in several software applications. Success rates on these additional courses are very high.

**Quality of education and training**

108. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. KBT has agreements and close contacts with a number of specialist training subcontractors that provide off-the-job training. KBT completes some formal monitoring and a review of this training, and learners are achieving satisfactory results in vocational tests and assignments. All learners are experiencing good on-the-job training provided by employers, completing a wide range of printing tasks to a very good standard. An example of this is one learner in origination who, within six months of beginning his employment, is producing good-quality magazines for professional organisations without direct supervision. Learners receive some structured on-the-job training and there is frequent performance evaluation.

109. Learners recruited to the programme are already employed. Training co-ordinators have been appointed by the provider to liaise with employers to effectively evaluate their learners' training needs. The initial assessment of learners during the early stages of their training programmes is satisfactory. Learners complete a series of literacy and numeracy

tests and key skills evaluations. When completed, any identified additional learning needs are satisfactorily planned between the learner and their appropriate subcontracted training provider. KBT's training co-ordinators are involved with this process and at times will initiate action if a need is determined by the progress review process.

110. Induction training is satisfactory. Induction includes general guidance about NVQ requirements and off-the-job training, including vocational qualifications. It also includes information on key skills, health and safety, and equality of opportunity. Learners have three different types of induction: one with their employer, one with their training co-ordinator and one at college. The induction is a memorable experience for learners who can recall most aspects of the training received.

111. Employers are highly committed to, and closely involved with the learning programmes. They are actively involved in the learners' progress reviews. Employers are fully supportive of learners' off-the-job vocational training. Some employers have extremely good training programmes. One employer, new to modern apprentice training, has established a system of training to enable a learner to begin a print project at origination stage and follow it through to a fully completed commercial job. The learner will work with the employer's subcontractor and develop skills not available in his normal workplace and above and beyond the requirement of his learning programme.

112. Work-based assessment is poor. Subcontracted assessors rarely visit the workplace. On average there are four visits during a level 2 and level 3 NVQ, over a period of three years. This does not meet the requirements of the awarding body. Assessment visits are not planned. Learners have little opportunity to formally demonstrate their competence at work. They have no paperwork at the end of a visit and many do not understand how this activity contributes to their NVQ. Work-based assessment activity is based on general discussion and review of paperwork and does not focus on the competence levels of the learners. Assessors do not make formal judgements of competence relative to work-based activities.

113. Learners are well supported. Progress reviews take place at least every 12 weeks and meet contractual requirements. If the review process identifies that a learner is having any difficulties the reviews become more frequent. Progress reviews are a mixture of pastoral support and review of progress. The learners' support needs and welfare are discussed in depth. Employers are frequently involved in the progress review discussions and have a good understanding of the learners' training needs.

114. Training co-ordinators are beginning to set effective targets to enable learners to maintain an acceptable level of progression through the objectives of their learning plan. Targets are meaningful and achievable. A particularly good aspect of this process is that targets are always followed up from one review to the next. Employers are given a copy of the review and the agreed targets. Employers give good levels of support to learners. Some employers have introduced mentoring systems. All learners commented on the value of their working relationship with their training co-ordinator.

115. Initial assessment is satisfactory and effectively identifies learners' individual needs.

## KETTERING BOROUGH TRAINING REINSPECTION

All learners are assessed for literacy and numeracy skills and key skills. Most learners do not require additional support and many are exempted from key skills external testing because of prior achievements. Where support needs are identified, the training co-ordinator and the subcontractor will discuss what level of support is required and this is implemented by the subcontractor. Support issues are recorded on the review paperwork and discussed at progress reviews.

### **Leadership and management**

116. KBT's staff give good levels of support to employers. Employers introducing and setting up modern apprentice training programmes for the first time receive good support and guidance from KBT's staff. Ongoing support for employers and their learners is also good.

117. The management of printing programmes is satisfactory. New procedures for progress reviews have been implemented and this has led to a more effective and better-recorded review process. Targets for the completion of NVQ units are set and followed up at the next review, 12 weeks later. Learning plans are not sufficiently individual and do not identify milestone achievements, or proposed intermediate target dates.

118. Learners' awareness of equality of opportunity issues is satisfactory. However, there is insufficient monitoring of the employers' commitment to their own, or KBT's equal opportunities policies. Wider issues concerning equality of opportunity are not discussed. One employer was noted to have inappropriate images displayed on a workshop wall.

119. Internal verification at KBT's major printing subcontractor is inadequate. The internal verification procedure has not identified, until recently, the poor practice associated with assessments in the workplace. This issue has been recently identified by the external verifier and an action plan to resolve the situation is being implemented.

**Foundation programmes****Grade 3**

Programmes inspected	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Life Skills	14	3

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

**Strengths**

- wide range of learning activities
- good training accommodation
- good support for learners

**Weaknesses**

- insufficient literacy and numeracy training
- insufficiently clear learning objectives in some training sessions
- poor target-setting

**Achievement and standards**

120. The standard of learners work is satisfactory. The achievement of learning aims and progression to further training or employment is also satisfactory and steadily improving. Since 2000-01, the proportion of learners successfully completing all planned learning has increased from 31 per cent to 61 per cent. Fifty-one per cent of learners find employment, or go on to further education or training after leaving the programme. The number of learners who stay on the programme for the expected duration has also improved, from 47 per cent in 2001-02, to 62 per cent in 2002-03.

121. Learners' progress towards achievement of their learning goals is satisfactory. Some learners are given extensions to their programmes, but this is usually because of significant health or personal problems. The average length of stay on the Life Skills programme is 16 weeks.

**Quality of education and training**

122. Initial assessment is satisfactory. Information from Connexions is used effectively to establish learners' needs and plan their programmes. All learners now have an initial assessment of their literacy and numeracy skills levels during induction. Induction is also satisfactory and covers all the main requirements to introduce learners to the Life Skills programme. However, there is insufficient learner participation during some parts of the induction, an over-reliance on verbal information and insufficient checking of understanding.

## KETTERING BOROUGH TRAINING REINSPECTION

123. All sessions observed during the inspection were satisfactory. Most were enjoyable and lively with an adequate use of training methods. Some were poorly prepared, with insufficient thought given to essential resources.

124. Learners benefit from the wide range of learning activities on offer. These activities are used as the basis for developing personal and social skills and are a significant factor in the initial engagement of the young people and motivating them to attend. Activities include: cooking; indoor and outdoor sports; gardening; community projects and sponsorship; residential and day-visits together with in-house educational sessions. Learners can also choose to attend leisure and special interest classes in the lifelong learning centre. Learners are strongly encouraged to explore new situations and learning opportunities. Some learners join a group of level 1 NVQ construction trades learners and can progress to this programme.

125. The arrangements for literacy and numeracy training are unsatisfactory. There is no diagnostic assessment to establish learners' priorities, or to develop an individual learning plan for literacy and numeracy. A tutor has recently been appointed to provide literacy and numeracy training, but some learners have not yet attended a session. Some learners attend a partner organisation for literacy or numeracy training, but their learning objectives and activities are not recorded by KBT. Progress in literacy and numeracy is not monitored during reviews. Learners' portfolios do not contain any evidence of literacy or numeracy skills and there is no integration of literacy and numeracy work with other aspects of learning. Some satisfactory resources for teaching literacy and numeracy are held in the Life Skills co-ordinator's office, but are not available for learners to use daily at the Life Skills training centre.

126. Most class-based learning activities have an outline session plan, but these plans have only recently been introduced. They do not fully identify learning methods, or adequately specify the learning objectives and expected outcomes of the sessions. The plans are not aligned to skill levels, or the literacy and numeracy national core curriculum. There is insufficient planning for different learners' individual abilities within the group session plans. Training sessions do not include enough development of literacy, numeracy or communication skills. Learners are unclear about the purpose of some sessions and the reason they are there. Most are not clear about how the sessions will contribute to their overall development.

127. The dedicated training rooms and kitchen are well furnished and provide a good learning environment. The building is welcoming and non-threatening and it demonstrates the value that KBT places on the learners. Within the lifelong learning centre, learners have access to the cyber café, gym, outdoor sports facilities and photographic and music studios. An attractive garden area has been built by learners and is maintained by them. They are proud of this achievement and it is highly valued by other users of the training centre.

128. Individual learning plans clearly identify broad development areas and these are well understood by learners. However, these development areas have not been divided into more specific, short-term targets since the previous inspection. Learners have a poor

understanding of what they will do next and how well they are progressing towards their long-term goals. Progress reviews are not effective in measuring learners' achievements and do not set small, measurable steps for learning. Learners are unable to develop skills for more independent learning.

129. Learners receive good support. Staff have experience of working with a wide range of learners and are sensitive to their social and support needs. Staff and learners have good working relationships which enable the learners to develop confidence and trust. The ratio of staff to learners is good, with a maximum of nine learners in group work and sessions are supported by two youth workers. The daily contact with the youth workers provides continuity and stability for the young people. KBT uses external agencies well and has a good partnership with the Connexions service's personal advisers. Exchange of information between partners is effective. The Life Skills team provides appropriate advice, guidance and support quickly, when personal issues arise.

### **Leadership and management**

130. The leadership and management of foundation programmes are satisfactory. Team meetings are regular and effective. They ensure that all team members understand any emerging issues encountered by individual learners. Members collaborate to develop the programme.

131. There have been some effective initiatives to improve the foundation provision. A work-placement co-ordinator was appointed to increase the focus on vocational opportunities. The number of learners having work experience has increased from 29 per cent to 51 per cent.

132. Learners' understanding and recall of equal opportunities issues is satisfactory. Equal opportunities is promoted well through posters on training room walls. Equality of opportunity is reinforced during citizenship elements of the programme. Any instances of harassment or bullying are promptly challenged by staff.

133. The provision of training and the introduction of observation of training sessions has improved youth workers' understanding of work-based learning.