

INSPECTION REPORT

Dimensions Training Solutions

22 August 2003



ADULT LEARNING
INSPECTORATE

DIMENSIONS TRAINING SOLUTIONS

Grading

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

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

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

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

The two grading scales relate to each other as follows:

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

Adult Learning Inspectorate

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

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

Overall judgement

Where the overall judgement is that the provision is adequate, only those aspects of the provision which are less than satisfactory will be reinspected.

Provision will normally be deemed to be inadequate where:

- more than one third of published grades for occupational/curriculum areas, **or**
- leadership and management are judged to be less than satisfactory.

This provision will be subject to a full reinspection.

The final decision as to whether the provision is inadequate rests with the Chief Inspector of Adult Learning. A statement as to whether the provision is adequate or not is included in the summary section of the inspection report.

INSPECTION REPORT

Dimensions Training Solutions

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INSPECTION REPORT

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROVIDER

1. Dimensions Training Solutions Ltd (DTS) was established as a private limited company in 1998. However, it has been operating since 1973 as part of two former company partnerships. The head office is in Barnsley. It provides work-based learning programmes in hairdressing for foundation modern apprentices, advanced modern apprentices, and learners working solely towards national vocational qualifications (NVQs). All learners are employed through a network of approximately 200 employers in North, West and South Yorkshire that provide on-the-job training. DTS has five training centres in Barnsley, Leeds, Sheffield, Wakefield and York. The training centres are used to provide off-the-job training in background knowledge, literacy, numeracy and language, key skills, portfolio-building and some practical training.

2. DTS's senior management team comprises the chief executive, the general manager, the quality co-ordinator, the training manager and the contracts manager. They are supported by an administration team. The chief executive has a dedicated personal assistant and is responsible for strategic planning and financial management. The general manager is responsible for the operational management of the provider. Responsibilities for quality assurance and equal opportunities lie with the quality co-ordinator. The training manager co-ordinates staff training and development, and the work of seven trainer/assessors, the assistant training manager and two basic skills specialists. The trainer/assessors are based at the five training centres. They are responsible for recruitment, induction, off-the-job training, liaison with employers, and the assessment and review of learners in the salons and at the training centres. DTS funds its training provision through the North, West and South Yorkshire Learning and Skills Councils (LSCs).

SCOPE OF PROVISION

Hairdressing & beauty therapy

3. There are currently 276 learners on hairdressing training programmes at DTS. There are 168 foundation modern apprentices, 97 advanced modern apprentices and 11 learners working towards NVQs at levels 1, 2 or 3 in hairdressing. All learners are employed by hairdressing salons in Yorkshire. Learners attend off-the-job training sessions at one of the five training centres. Most learners attend the training centre for one day each week for hairdressing theory training and some practical training. All learners receive practical training in the workplace.

ABOUT THE INSPECTION

Number of inspectors	4
Number of inspection days	20
Number of learner interviews	61
Number of staff interviews	37
Number of employer interviews	15
Number of locations/sites/learning centres visited	5

OVERALL JUDGEMENT

4. The quality of the provision is adequate to meet the reasonable needs of those receiving it. More specifically, training in hairdressing is satisfactory. Leadership and management, and arrangements for quality assurance, and equality of opportunity are also satisfactory.

GRADES

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

Leadership and management	3
Contributory grades:	
Equality of opportunity	3
Quality assurance	3

Hairdressing & beauty therapy	3
Contributory grades:	
Work-based learning for young people	3

KEY FINDINGS

Achievement and standards

5. Learners develop satisfactory practical skills and most learners produce good practical work. They produce satisfactory portfolios of evidence, which are well presented with good use of visual images and a wide range of evidence.

6. Previous retention and achievement rates on the modern apprenticeship frameworks were unsatisfactory. Of 67 learners starting an advanced modern apprenticeship in 2000-01, only 17 completed all aspects of their modern apprenticeship framework, with 13 still in learning. Of 52 learners starting a foundation modern apprenticeship in 2000-01, only four learners have completed all aspects of their framework, with eight still in learning. However, DTS has implemented effective organisational changes. There has been a

significant improvement in retention rates since 2000-01. Of the 30 advanced modern apprentices who started their programme in 2002-03, 28 are still in learning. Of the 137 foundation modern apprentices who started their programme in 2002-03, 92 are still in learning. At the time of inspection, 19 foundation modern apprentices and 13 advanced modern apprentices were making good progress towards the achievement of their qualification within the timescale.

Quality of education and training

Grades awarded to learning sessions

	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Total
Hairdressing & beauty therapy	0	1	2	2	0	0	0	5
Total	0	1	2	2	0	0	0	5

7. **There is good key skills training and assessment.** Assessors effectively link learners' key skills with vocational assessments and use their hairdressing experience effectively to demonstrate where key skills are relevant to the workplace. Learners and assessors have a good understanding of key skills. Learners produce good key skills portfolios. There has been a significant improvement in key skills achievement. Only one learner successfully achieved their key skills in 2002. To date in 2003, 29 learners have successfully achieved their key skills.

8. **Learners develop good literacy and numeracy skills** through effective and vocationally relevant individual support and group sessions. Each learner is set literacy and numeracy targets, which are clearly recorded on an individual learning plan. Learners receive assessment at regular stages to identify and evaluate the support provided. The outcomes of these assessments are used well to provide further support. Trainers use a wide range of teaching techniques.

9. **Learners receive particularly good pastoral and vocational support** and individual support if required. They are able to contact assessors at any time. Staff regularly contact learners who leave early, to encourage them back onto the learning programme. Trainers and assessors give additional individual support if required in both theory and practical work.

10. **Long-term target-setting is ineffective.** Most learners are unclear about their long-term targets. Learners are not sufficiently involved in the planning of their learning or provided with adequate evidence to complete whole units.

11. **There is insufficient assessment of some learners.** Some work-based assessors do not carry out enough assessments. Some learners find it difficult to obtain an appropriate model for assessment to coincide with their six-weekly visit by the assessor. There is not enough assessment of practical work at the training centres. Most learners are unaware that DTS provides a hotline for learners to request assessments at times which suit them.

Leadership and management

12. **DTS has implemented, and managed well, significant changes to improve its training.** There has been an effective organisational re-structuring to implement these changes. The self-assessment process is used well. Development plans from self-assessment reports are thoroughly monitored and reviewed by the senior management team. DTS plans effectively on a strategic level. It has used external consultants effectively to rectify key organisational weaknesses. Retention rates and the achievement of key skills have increased significantly in 2002-03. DTS has appointed three members of staff to provide literacy and numeracy skills and key skills support. All staff now have a clearer understanding of the future strategic direction and their individual responsibilities.

13. **Staff work together effectively as a team.** The management team are accessible to all members of staff and work alongside all staff at the head office. Staff are encouraged to contribute to strategic decision-making. Staff work together well to share information, ideas and good practice. There is a strong commitment to support each other's personal development. The trainer/assessors meet regularly and communicate well, both formally and informally, across a wide geographical area. The senior management team has recently established clear roles and lines of responsibility in senior management team meetings. This has been effective in supporting strategic teamwork.

14. Resources are managed adequately. The chief executive adequately sets and monitors the overall budget for the provider. Funds have been prioritised to support the implementation of key changes. Two training centres have been moved to prime city centre locations to improve accessibility.

15. Staff development is satisfactory. There is a clear staff training and development policy and procedure. Training needs are reviewed and monitored through the appraisal system. All staff, including salon work-based assessors, have a current training and development plan.

16. **The use of management data is ineffective.** Data are not used effectively to aid future planning. Although strategic objectives have been in use, there is currently no strategic or business plan. The development plan does not have long-term targets to support strategic planning. There has been slow implementation of strategic objectives to tackle identified weaknesses.

17. **There is effective promotion of equality of opportunity.** DTS has reviewed all of its equal opportunities documents and produced new policies with associated implementation arrangements and guidelines. Responsibilities in key areas are clearly outlined for identified members of staff. Some of this has been simplified for learners' use. There is a well-established grievance procedure and a separate equal opportunities grievance procedure. Learners have a good understanding of their rights and responsibilities and the complaints, appeals and grievance procedures. Complaints are resolved effectively. DTS is participating successfully in an initiative to support disadvantaged young people at school and to encourage their achievement and

progression onto the foundation modern apprenticeship.

18. **There are particularly good actions to meet learners' needs.** DTS provides equal access to additional learning support for all its learners. There is good development of learners' self-esteem. Trainer/assessors provide good support for learners with personal or social difficulties. DTS has carried out good actions to support learners with dyslexia. Learners with basic skills support needs are progressing well. Learners are able to access external organisations for specialist support.

19. DTS carries out satisfactory monitoring of the accessibility of its training centres. Staff have a good understanding of the alternative arrangements available for people with mobility difficulties. DTS promotes its commitment to providing alternative arrangements in its equal opportunities policies and procedures.

20. **There is inadequate monitoring of equal opportunities.** DTS collects learners' data at application, recruitment and completion. However, it does not use or analyse all these effectively. It does not use a wide range of equality of opportunity indicators. Data have not been used adequately to develop the new equality of opportunity targets for trainer/assessors. Staff do not sufficiently understand or monitor these targets effectively. Data are not used effectively to target all under-represented groups. There are insufficient links with community organisations to widen participation. Advertising materials do not adequately promote diversity. DTS does not monitor its staffing profile. There is inconsistent use of legislation in all of DTS's policies and procedures.

21. **There is insufficient reinforcement of understanding of equal opportunities among learners, staff and employers.** Learners' understanding of equality and diversity is not sufficiently reinforced during progress reviews or through training, learning materials and assessments. There has been some equal opportunities training for staff, but this is not part of a structured training plan. DTS does not offer equal opportunities training to employers. It does not adequately monitor employers' equality of opportunity practices.

22. Internal verification arrangements are satisfactory. Verification visits are regular and planned up to three months in advance. Reports are produced which cover most aspects of the assessment process. There is a long-term sampling plan. Internal verifiers observe assessors frequently and give useful feedback. There are regular meetings between assessors to standardise assessment procedures.

23. The current self-assessment report is satisfactory. Its associated development plan sets clear actions for staff. Staff have been able to comment on draft versions of the report. There is not enough involvement of learners or employers in the self-assessment process. Some staff do not understand how the self-assessment report is used. The self-assessment report accurately identified most of the key weaknesses.

24. **Some quality assurance arrangements are incomplete.** DTS has a well-established quality assurance manual with policies and procedures. However, it has been slow to update these procedures. There is currently no planned cycle of review which reflects all aspects of the learners' experience. However, there is regular internal auditing and

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sampling of trainer/assessor paperwork. Good use is made of external consultancy and audits for continuous improvement. Observations of teaching and learning are well established. Outcomes of observation are linked informally to individual appraisals. However, some feedback is not translated effectively into clear targets for staff. Comparison of performance indicators on a regional and national basis is not well established.

25. **The collection, analysis and evaluation of feedback from employers and learners is inconsistent.** There is an over-reliance on informal feedback from trainer/assessors. Learners' feedback is now analysed and acted on effectively. However, it is too early to judge the impact of these recent changes. DTS does not provide employers with a sufficiently effective mechanism for contributing to continuous improvement.

The following strengths and weaknesses were identified during this inspection:

Leadership and management

Strengths

- well-managed organisational change
- good teamwork
- effective promotion of equal opportunities
- particularly good actions to meet learners' needs

Weaknesses

- ineffective use of management data
- inadequate monitoring of equal opportunities
- insufficient reinforcement of understanding of equal opportunities among learners, staff and employers
- some incomplete quality assurance arrangements

Hairdressing & beauty therapy

Strengths

- good key skills training and assessment
- good development of literacy and numeracy skills
- particularly good learner support

Weaknesses

- ineffective long-term target-setting
- insufficient assessment for some learners

WHAT LEARNERS LIKE ABOUT DIMENSIONS TRAINING SOLUTIONS:

- the personal support provided by trainer/assessors
- the way in which training is made fun and easy to understand
- being able to meet other learners at the training centres
- the accessibility of the training centres
- the individual tuition

WHAT LEARNERS THINK DIMENSIONS TRAINING SOLUTIONS COULD IMPROVE:

- the amount of practical training at the training centres
- the quantity of stock at the training centres
- the opportunities to go on trips to hair shows and see demonstrations and competitions
- the number of assessments in the salons

KEY CHALLENGES FOR DIMENSIONS TRAINING SOLUTIONS:

- improve the use of management data to develop effective strategic-planning
- continue to improve retention and achievement rates
- involve employers more effectively in programme planning and evaluation
- ensure that equality of opportunity among learners, staff and employers is reinforced and monitored effectively and consistently
- formalise quality assurance arrangements for all aspects of the learners' experience

DETAILED INSPECTION FINDINGS

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Grade 3

The following strengths and weaknesses were identified during this inspection:

Strengths

- well-managed organisational change
- good teamwork
- effective promotion of equal opportunities
- particularly good actions to meet learners' needs

Weaknesses

- ineffective use of management data
- inadequate monitoring of equal opportunities
- insufficient reinforcement of understanding of equal opportunities among learners, staff and employers
- some incomplete quality assurance arrangements

26. DTS has implemented and managed well significant organisational changes. A strategic decision was made in 2002 to improve the training, retention and achievement rates and an organisational restructure was implemented. A quality co-ordinator was appointed in October 2002 and has successfully improved arrangements for quality assurance and equal opportunities. A critical self-assessment report was produced to support changes and this has been revised to reflect the organisation's improvements. Development plans arising from the self-assessment report clearly identify actions to improve weaknesses. DTS' development plan is rigorously monitored and reviewed by the senior management team with appropriate revisions made. DTS has started to plan on a strategic level more effectively. Recent organisational changes include a one-month trial for learners to assess their suitability for the learning programme. Retention rates have increased significantly for 2002-03. At the time of inspection, the retention rate was 93 per cent for advanced modern apprentices and 67 per cent for foundation modern apprentices. DTS has organised key skills consultancy and training for trainer/assessors. All staff are now confident to carry out key skills training and assessment. The number of learners achieving their key skills has increased from one learner in 2002 to 29 learners in 2003. The management team has introduced incentives for staff and learners to encourage full modern apprenticeship framework completions. Most learners at DTS have additional learning needs. DTS has appointed two members of staff to provide literacy and numeracy support and key skills training and assessment. Another member of staff has recently been appointed and will take up post shortly. Group and individual literacy and numeracy support has recently been introduced to improve learners' self-esteem, skills development and motivation. The chief executive has led the organisational changes well, and this is recorded in minutes of meetings and awaydays. All staff are committed to improve the training. A general manager has

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recently been appointed to manage the company's strategic direction. All staff now have a clearer understanding of the company's strategic direction and their associated individual responsibilities.

27. Staff at DTS work together effectively as a team. The management team are accessible to all members of staff and work alongside staff at the head office. Staff are encouraged to contribute to strategic decision-making. Staff work together well to share information, ideas and good practice. There is a strong commitment to support each other's personal development. There is good communication and teamwork among the trainer/assessors. They meet regularly and communicate well, both formally and informally, across a wide geographical area. Responsibility for implementing quality assurance arrangements is shared across the organisation and has promoted effective working relationships. The senior management team has recently established clear roles and lines of responsibility in senior management team meetings. This has been effective in supporting strategic teamwork.

28. Management of resources is satisfactory. The chief executive adequately sets and monitors the overall budget. Senior managers effectively negotiate operational and consumable budgets. Funds have been prioritised to support key management of change initiatives, including senior management appointments, consultancy support, additional basic skills staff and incentive schemes. Learning accommodation is satisfactory. Two training centres have been moved to good city centre locations to improve accessibility.

29. Staff development is satisfactory. All staff have appropriate training to meet the requirements of the NVQ. There is a clear staff development policy and procedure. This starts at induction with a training needs analysis and follow-up training action plan. Action plans have a timescale for completion. Training needs are reviewed and monitored through the appraisal system. All staff, including work-based assessors, have an up-to-date training and development plan.

30. There is ineffective use of management data. DTS collates data but does not analyse them effectively to influence business decisions. Although strategic objectives have been used over the past three years, there is currently no strategic or business plan which uses data for forward and financial planning. Data are not used to set targets for the wider aspects of business performance and long-term strategic-planning. The recent development plan and financial plans include short-term targets to tackle key identified weaknesses. However, there is no evidence of targets to support the achievement of long-term strategic objectives. DTS does not set performance targets for individual members of staff. However, trainer/assessors are set retention and achievement targets, but staff do not fully understand the link between LSC targets and the provider's own retention and achievement targets. There has been slow implementation of strategic objectives to tackle weaknesses in provision. The recording of minutes of senior management meetings does not identify actions with completion dates linked to specific members of staff. Formal agendas for progress reviews have only recently been introduced.

Equality of opportunity**Contributory grade 3**

31. There is effective promotion of equality of opportunity. All staff fully understand the company's commitment to equal opportunities, which is clearly displayed on all the company's paperwork and advertising material. All employers sign an agreement that clearly outlines their contractual obligations to implementing equality of opportunity. DTS has reviewed all its equal opportunities paperwork and has produced new policies with associated implementation arrangements and guidelines. Responsibilities in key areas are clearly outlined for specific members of staff. Some equal opportunities information has been written for learners. There is a well-established grievance procedure and a separate equal opportunities grievance procedure. Learners have a good understanding of their rights and responsibilities and of the complaints, appeals and grievance procedures, which are introduced effectively at induction. These procedures are reinforced during progress reviews. Complaints are resolved effectively. DTS is participating successfully in an initiative to support disadvantaged young people at school to encourage their achievement and progression onto the foundation modern apprenticeship programme.

32. There are particularly good actions to meet learners' needs. DTS provides equal access to additional learning support for all its learners. There is good development of learners' self-esteem. Trainer/assessors have particularly good working relationships with learners. They provide good support for learners with personal or social difficulties. A support line is available for all learners. DTS can provide transport for learners to the training centres, continued training for learners who are unemployed, and the use of alternative venues for assessments. It has implemented good actions to support learners with dyslexia. For example, DTS provides scribes, specially adapted materials for use in training and in salons, and effective support during assessment in accordance with learners' needs. Application forms are available in languages other than English. There is effective development of learners' literacy and numeracy skills. Learners with additional learning needs carry out a range of assessments and are given effective individual action plans. Some learners have significant literacy and numeracy needs and are progressing well. Learners are able to access external organisations for specialist support.

33. DTS carries out satisfactory monitoring of the accessibility of its training centres. Staff have a good understanding of the alternative arrangements available for people with restricted mobility. DTS promotes its commitment to providing alternative arrangements satisfactorily in its equal opportunities policies and procedures. DTS is planning to carry out further work in this area.

34. There is inadequate monitoring of equal opportunities. DTS collects learners' data at application, recruitment and completion. However, it does not use or effectively analyse these data. It does not use equality indicators such as type of achievement, the learner's starting point, employer, type of learning needs or indicators of disadvantage, such as lone parents. DTS has recently started to set equality targets for trainer/assessors. However, data have not been used well to develop these targets. Staff do not sufficiently understand or effectively monitor these targets. Data are not used well to promote the learning programmes to under-represented groups. There are insufficient links with community organisations to widen participation. Some advertising and

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community initiatives have been carried out, but these have yet to make a sufficient impact. Advertising materials do not adequately promote diversity. DTS does not monitor its staffing profile. There is inconsistent use of legislation in all DTS's policies and procedures. There is inappropriate use of language in the application and health questionnaire form for learners with respect to people with disabilities. Equal opportunities has only recently been introduced as a formal agenda item at meetings.

35. There is insufficient reinforcement of understanding of equal opportunities among learners, staff and employers. Learners do not fully understand the wider issues of equality and diversity. These issues are not sufficiently reinforced at the review process or through training, learning materials and assessments. Some learners have recently attended external equal opportunities training, but this has not yet been taken up by all learners. There has been some equal opportunities training for staff, but this is not part of a structured training or action plan. There is ineffective training on equal opportunities at staff induction. Some staff do not fully understand key equality and diversity issues. DTS does not offer equal opportunities training to employers or have adequate monitoring arrangements in place to ensure that employers are implementing effective equality of opportunity practices. DTS does not adequately check that employers are complying with legislation relevant to equality of opportunity in the workplace or routinely check understanding. There is an over-reliance on learners' understanding to provide checks on employers' equal opportunities practices.

Quality assurance

Contributory grade 3

36. DTS has a well-established quality assurance manual with policies and procedures. However, some quality assurance arrangements are incomplete. DTS has not updated its quality assurance procedures, which are currently under review. There is currently no planned cycle of review which reflects all aspects of the learners' experience. However, there is regular internal auditing and sampling of trainer/assessor paperwork, including the auditing of progress reviews and individual learning plans. Staff act on the written feedback they receive. Good use is made of external consultancy and audits for continuous improvement. Observations of teaching and learning are well established. Although observations are not graded, feedback is provided to staff. Observations of new staff take place more frequently. Outcomes of observation are linked informally to individual appraisals and meetings. However, some feedback is not translated effectively into clear action points and targets for staff. Comparison of performance indicators on a regional and national basis has recently started to take place on a regular basis. Employers' agreements are satisfactory and outline responsibilities for health and safety and equal opportunities.

37. Internal verification arrangements are satisfactory and conform to awarding body requirements. Verification is adequately planned and recorded. Internal verifiers monitor and observe assessments to a satisfactory level. Internal verifiers and assessors meet regularly to provide feedback and share good practice.

38. The collection, analysis and evaluation of employers' and learners' feedback is inconsistent. There is an over-reliance on informal feedback from trainer/assessors. DTS

has recently established a formal feedback procedure and feedback from learners is now analysed and acted on effectively. However, it is too early to judge the impact of these recent changes. DTS does not provide employers with a sufficiently effective mechanism for contributing to continuous improvement. Some employers are not feeding back to DTS on key programme planning and delivery issues.

39. The first self-assessment report was produced in 2000. However, there has been a gap in relevant activity until the new quality co-ordinator was appointed in 2002. The current self-assessment report is satisfactory. Its associated development plan sets clear actions for members of staff. Staff have been able to comment on draft versions of the report. There has not been enough learner or employer involvement in the self-assessment process, although some informal discussions have taken place. Some staff are not clear about the strengths and weaknesses in the self-assessment report and have a poor understanding of how the document is to be used. The self-assessment report accurately identifies most of the key weaknesses. However, DTS did not identify its strengths in equal opportunities. The strengths identified by DTS in the area of learning were found to be no more than satisfactory practice. Inspectors agreed with the grades in the self-assessment report.

AREAS OF LEARNING

Hairdressing & beauty therapy

Grade 3

Programmes inspected	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Work-based learning for young people	276	3

The following strengths and weaknesses were identified during this inspection:

Strengths

- good key skills training and assessment
- good development of literacy and numeracy skills
- particularly good learner support

Weaknesses

- ineffective long-term target-setting
- insufficient assessment for some learners

Achievement and standards

40. Learners develop satisfactory practical skills. Most learners produce good practical work. Portfolios and written work are satisfactory. Portfolios are well presented, with good use of visual images and a wide range of evidence.

41. Of 67 advanced modern apprentices who started in 2000-01, only 17 completed all aspects of their framework, with 13 still in learning. Of 52 foundation modern apprentices who started in 2000-01, only four learners have completed all aspects of their framework, with eight still in learning. However, DTS has implemented effective organisational changes. There have been significant improvements in retention rates since 2000-01. Of the 30 advanced modern apprentices who started their programme in 2002-03, 28 are still in learning. Of the 137 foundation modern apprentices who started their programme in 2002-03, 92 are still in learning. At the time of inspection it was identified that 19 foundation modern apprentices and 13 advanced modern apprentices were making good progress towards the achievement of their qualification.

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

LSC funded work-based learning																
Advanced modern apprenticeships (AMA)	2002-03		2001-02		2000-01		1999-2000		1998-99							
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
	Number of starts	30		91		67		67		24						
Retained*	4		15		17		6		11							
Successfully completed	0		0		2		1		1							
Still in learning	28		48		13		7		1							

*retained learners are those who have stayed in learning for at least the planned duration of their training programmes, or have successfully completed their programme within the time allowed

LSC funded work-based learning																
Foundation modern apprenticeships (FMA)	2002-03		2001-02		2000-01		1999-2000		1998-99							
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
	Number of starts	137		195		52		55		18						
Retained*	3		23		23		10	18	4	22						
Successfully completed	1		9		4		1	2	0	0						
Still in learning	92		68		8		0	0	0	0						

*retained learners are those who have stayed in learning for at least the planned duration of their training programmes, or have successfully completed their programme within the time allowed

LSC funded work-based learning																
NVQ Training	2002-03		2001-02		2000-01		1999-2000		1998-99							
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
	Number of starts	3		5		102		42		16						
Retained*	0		2		41		14		10							
Successfully completed	0		0		31		12		9							
Still in learning	2		1		7		1		0							

*retained learners are those who have stayed in learning for at least the planned duration of their training programmes, or have successfully completed their programme within the time allowed

Quality of education and training

42. DTS provides good key skills training and assessment. Assessors and learners fully understand the key skills requirements. Assessors effectively link learners' key skills with NVQ vocational assessments. Learners clearly understand how key skills can be used in the workplace. Learners have good and diverse evidence within their key skills portfolios. Portfolios are well presented and relevant to the hairdressing industry. Trainer/assessors frequently use their experience within the hairdressing industry to demonstrate effectively to learners where key skills are relevant to the workplace. Within

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the last year there has been a significant improvement in key skills achievement. Only one learner successfully achieved their key skills in 2002. To date in 2003, 29 learners have successfully achieved their key skills.

43. Learners develop good literacy and numeracy skills. Currently 95 per cent of the foundation modern apprentices at DTS have additional literacy and numeracy needs. A number of advanced modern apprentices also have these needs. Literacy and numeracy support is provided by two members of staff, one of whom has received relevant training. DTS is planning to arrange further training for staff and has recently appointed an additional member of staff to develop learners' literacy and numeracy skills. Staff set learners literacy and numeracy targets. An individual learning plan is then developed that clearly sets out the support required and when it will be provided. Accurate records are kept of these support sessions. Learners receive further assessment at regular stages to identify and evaluate the support provided. Staff use these assessments well to adapt and provide further support sessions to meet learners' needs. DTS also provides literacy and numeracy learning sessions on a group basis which are vocationally relevant. Trainers use a wide range of teaching techniques to help learners develop their skills. Staff have matched the basic skills standards to the key skills requirements and the hairdressing NVQ.

44. Learners receive particularly good pastoral and vocational support. Staff give very good advice to learners and help them to develop their skills and self-confidence. All learners are given the mobile number of an assessor for use at any time. The ratio of trainers to learners is good with two trainers supporting 10 learners in many training centre sessions. Learners receive individual support if required in both background knowledge and practical work. Additional practical support is also provided. For example, DTS provided a scribe for one learner who had injured their wrist. Learners who are having difficulties completing the full range of units within the workplace are helped by assessors to find suitable hairdressing models at the training centres. Staff are skilled at giving clear explanations to learners and use a variety of different teaching and learning techniques. Staff are contacted by learners experiencing social difficulties outside the workplace and frequently provide effective support. Learners who leave the programme early are contacted regularly by staff to encourage them back onto their learning programme.

45. Resources at the training centres and work placements are satisfactory. Equipment is up to date and all of the training centres are in accessible city centre locations. DTS recently relocated its Leeds and York training centres to the city centre to improve access for learners. Not enough practical assessments are carried out at the training centres with an incomplete range of professional products available for learners to use.

46. At the beginning of their learning programme, learners are invited to complete a trial period of one month to evaluate their suitability to the hairdressing industry. If learners choose to commit to a hairdressing training programme after this period, they receive a two-day induction. This provides learners with information on equal opportunities, health and safety and the NVQ.

47. Initial assessment arrangements are satisfactory. Learners have an initial assessment during induction. This includes a diagnostic assessment of their literacy and numeracy skills. Learners' support needs are appropriately identified. Learners are working towards the correct level of qualification.

48. Learners' long-term targets are ineffective. Most learners are unclear about their long-term targets and are unsure when they are likely to complete their programme. Some learners close to completing a unit are unaware of when the unit is expected to be completed. Learners are not sufficiently involved in the planning of their learning or their progression towards completing their qualification. Progress reviews are carried out every six weeks in the workplace. Learners and some employers are able to contribute to the short-term target-setting during the reviews. These targets are adequately demanding with appropriate timescales. Learners fully understand what they need to do to achieve these targets. However, learners are not given sufficient guidance to complete whole units.

49. There is insufficient assessment for some learners. Currently, there are 16 work-based assessors with 23 working towards an assessor qualification. Some work-based assessors do not carry out enough assessment. Where there are no work-based assessors, learners have access to assessment every six weeks in the workplace by DTS assessors. Some learners find it difficult to obtain the correct type of hairdressing model to coincide with these assessment visits. On some occasions, learners have hairdressing models available for assessment outside the six-weekly visits. DTS provides an assessment hotline that learners can use to request assessment when a suitable hairdressing model is available. However, most learners are not aware of this. Not enough assessment of practical work takes place at the training centres.

Leadership and management

50. DTS has made effective changes to the management of its learning programmes. Trainer/assessors work well together and communicate regularly to provide support for learners. Internal verification arrangements are satisfactory. Verification visits are regular and planned up to three months in advance. Reports are produced to cover most aspects of the assessment process. There is a long-term sampling plan that covers DTS and work-based assessors across a wide range of evidence. Internal verifiers observe assessors frequently and give adequate feedback. There are regular meetings between assessors to standardise assessment procedures. Internal verification can be monitored through learners' portfolios and is standardised across the different training centres and salons. Some employers do not have sufficient opportunity to feed back their views on all aspects of the training provision.