

# REINSPECTION REPORT

## **BTCV Enterprises Limited Reinspection**

**19 March 2004**



ADULT LEARNING  
INSPECTORATE

## Grading

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

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

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

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

The two grading scales relate to each other as follows:

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

## Adult Learning Inspectorate

The Adult Learning Inspectorate (ALI) was established under the provisions of the *Learning and Skills Act 2000* to bring the inspection of all aspects of adult learning and work-based learning within the remit of a single inspectorate. The ALI is responsible for inspecting a wide range of government-funded learning, including:

- work-based learning for all people over 16
- provision in further education colleges for people aged 19 and over
- the University for Industry's **learndirect** provision
- Adult and Community Learning
- learning and job preparation programmes funded by Jobcentre Plus
- education and training in prisons, at the invitation of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Prisons.

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

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## **BTCV Enterprises Limited Reinspection**

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## REINSPECTION REPORT

### DESCRIPTION OF THE PROVIDER

1. BTCV Enterprises Limited (BTCVE) is a limited company. It is the trading subsidiary of the British Trust for Conservation Volunteers (BTCV), which was established in 1959 with the mission to create a more sustainable future by inspiring people and improving places. The main aim of BTCVE's provision is to help unemployed and disadvantaged people who have barriers to entering employment. BTCVE contracts with Jobcentre Plus in nine different regions in England, and has sites in Torquay, Hastings, Northampton, Swindon, Morecambe, Chesterfield, Workington, Barrow, Sheffield, Huddersfield and Gateshead. Clients participate in New Deal 18-24, New Deal 25+ and work-based learning for adults in land-based provision; business administration; management and professional; information and communications technology (ICT); retailing, customer service and transportation; and foundation programmes. Client numbers in business administration, management and professional were too small for this area of learning to be reinspected. BTCVE also offers provision in Wales, Northern Ireland and Scotland.

### SCOPE OF PROVISION

#### Land-based provision

2. BTCVE has 171 clients following land-based provision, of whom 85 are on the environment task force option of New Deal 18-24, and 86 are on New Deal 25+. Training is offered at 11 of BTCVE's training centres. Clients are given a two-day induction at the beginning of the programme. An individual learning plan is completed during the first two weeks of the programme. Many clients are identified as having additional learning and/or social needs. Clients are allocated work placements in groups of between four and 10 on one of BTCVE's projects. They receive practical training and most of their background knowledge training in the workplace, although classroom facilities are also sometimes used. Clients attend jobsearch training on one day each week. Off-the-job training is offered if it is necessary to meet the requirements of a qualification. Qualifications to provide accreditation for environmental, horticultural, or generic employability skills are offered to all New Deal 18-24 clients, and to New Deal 25+ clients at some centres. Clients' progress is reviewed monthly. Assessment is carried out by BTCVE's trainers or assessors. Internal verification is also carried out by BTCVE's staff.

### **Information & communications technology**

3. Fifty-three clients are following programmes in ICT. Thirteen of these clients are following 26-week environment task force or full-time education and training options of New Deal 18-24 at BTCVE's computer training centre. Clients typically spend two to three days each week on work placements to gain work experience, one day on jobsearch activities and one day attending their ICT training course. Forty New Deal 25+ clients are on one of four schemes: three-month intensive activity period training or work experience, a three-month short job-focused training programme, or a longer occupational training or basic employability training (BET) programme of up to six months' duration. All clients are unemployed and attend training for up to 30 hours a week, with programmes lasting for between two to 26 weeks. The ICT programmes are offered at two training centres, with training provided by BTCVE's staff. Clients work towards units in an introductory computer literacy course, an examination-based qualification in information technology, and web page design qualifications at levels 1 and 2. Clients are referred by Jobcentre Plus advisers and can join the programme at any time of the year. They receive an initial assessment and an induction, and their progress is formally reviewed every four weeks. Clients are required to carry out jobsearch activities each week.

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

4. Fifty-nine clients are following retailing, customer service and transportation programmes: 46 on the New Deal 18-24 voluntary sector option and 13 on New Deal 25+. Training is offered at BTCVE's centres in Cumbria, Northampton, Sheffield and Swindon. BTCVE uses subcontractors for the delivery and assessment of national vocational qualifications (NVQs) and lift truck training. All clients are referred to BTCVE by Jobcentre Plus and undergo an initial assessment before joining the programme. An induction, which includes health and safety, equality of opportunity and job-related skills, is given on the first day of the programme. An individual learning plan is drawn up for each client. BTCVE finds work placements for clients, which they attend for four days a week. The fifth day is spent in BTCVE's centre developing job-related skills. Most New Deal 18-24 clients are working towards NVQ units in retailing, customer service or warehousing. A few clients follow lift truck training courses, including basic certificates for counterbalance and reach trucks. Clients are offered in-house training leading to certificates in health and safety, first aid and basic food hygiene. The work-placement officer visits clients at work at least once a month. Assessors visit clients in the workplace every two to four weeks to assess NVQ evidence. The frequency of visits depends on which subcontractor the client has been allocated to.

## Foundation programmes

5. Fifty-six clients are following foundation programmes: 22 on New Deal 18-24 and 34 on New Deal 25+. BTCVE offers foundation programmes at all of its regional training centres, though only three centres had clients following these programmes during the reinspection. All clients are unemployed, and attend programmes for 30 hours a week for up to 26 weeks. All adult clients are on BET programmes. Following induction and off-the-job training, BET clients take part in work experience for three or four days a week as soon as a suitable work placement can be found. During their work experience they attend a local BTCVE training centre on one day a week for jobsearch and personal development training. At the time of the reinspection, approximately 90 per cent of adult clients had a work placement. Of the New Deal 18-24 clients, 18 are on the environment task force option, and the remainder are on the voluntary sector option. During the reinspection, three of the New Deal 18-24 clients were in work-experience placements and the remainder were carrying out project work in land-based industries. Clients of all ages have their off-the-job training accredited through an entry level certificate in personal development.

## ABOUT THE REINSPECTION

Number of inspectors	8
Number of inspection days	38
Number of learner interviews	133
Number of staff interviews	94
Number of employer interviews	20
Number of locations/sites/learning centres visited	11
Number of visits	32

## OVERALL JUDGEMENT

6. The previous inspection in November 2002 found BTCVE's leadership and management, arrangements for quality assurance and approach to equality of opportunity to be very weak. The training in land-based provision and ICT was found to be satisfactory, while training in retailing, customer service and transportation and in foundation programmes was found to be unsatisfactory. Training in business administration, management and professional was very weak. This area of learning was not reinspected. At the end of the reinspection process, all aspects of provision that were reinspected were found to be satisfactory or better.

## GRADES

Grades awarded at previous inspection

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

<b>Leadership and management</b>	<b>5</b>
Contributory grades:	
Equality of opportunity	5
Quality assurance	5

<b>Land-based provision</b>	<b>3</b>
Contributory grades:	
New Deal 18-24	3
New Deal 25+	4

<b>Business administration, management &amp; professional</b>	<b>5</b>
Contributory grades:	
New Deal 25+	5

<b>Information &amp; communications technology</b>	<b>3</b>
Contributory grades:	
New Deal 18-24	3
New Deal 25+	3

<b>Retailing, customer service &amp; transportation</b>	<b>4</b>
Contributory grades:	
New Deal 18-24	4

<b>Foundation programmes</b>	<b>4</b>
Contributory grades:	
New Deal 25+	4
New Deal 18-24	4

Grades awarded at reinspection

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

<b>Leadership and management</b>	<b>3</b>
Contributory grades:	
Equality of opportunity	3
Quality assurance	3



Land-based provision	3
Contributory grades:	
New Deal 25+	3
New Deal 18-24	3

Information & communications technology	3
Contributory grades:	
New Deal 25+	3
New Deal 18-24	3

Retailing, customer service & transportation	2
Contributory grades:	
New Deal 18-24	2
New Deal 25+	2

Foundation programmes	3
Contributory grades:	
New Deal 25+	3
New Deal 18-24	3

## KEY FINDINGS

### Achievement and standards

**7. Clients on land-based provision continue to develop good personal and practical skills.** Project work helps to build clients' self-esteem, motivation and confidence. Clients interviewed say they value the support they receive to develop good practical skills through work on a good range of environmental and horticultural activities. The rates of progress into employment for land-based programmes vary considerably between centres, **and are poor overall for New Deal 25+ clients.**

**8. Rates of progress into employment are poor for ICT clients.** Twenty-six per cent of New Deal 18-24 clients in 2003-04 have so far progressed into jobs, with 28 per cent still in learning. Although progress into employment for New Deal 25+ clients has improved from 5 per cent in 2001-02 to 18 per cent so far for 2003-04, with another 19 per cent still in learning, this rate is also poor. Clients produce work of a satisfactory standard.

**9. Retailing, customer service and transportation clients develop good employment skills.** Most clients have made considerable progress in developing new skills in the workplace, and some have increased their work-placement role and responsibilities while on the programme. Clients working towards NVQ units in retailing, customer service or warehousing have a satisfactory range and level of evidence in their portfolios.

10. Rates of retention and progression into employment for foundation programmes are satisfactory and meet the Jobcentre Plus contract targets. Clients develop satisfactory vocational skills in work placements and produce portfolios of assessed work to a good standard. Overall, the development of clients' literacy, numeracy and language skills is satisfactory. Seventy-one New Deal 18-24 clients took part in work experience between April 2003 and February 2004, and 46 clients gained a job directly from their work-experience placements.

### 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
Land-based provision	0	0	0	5	1	0	0	6
Information & communications technology	0	1	2	0	0	0	0	3
Foundation programmes	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>11</b>

11. Training and learning has improved generally at BTCVE since the previous inspection. Nine per cent of learning sessions observed were less than satisfactory, compared with 37 per cent at the previous inspection. **Training and learning in ICT are good**, with all observed sessions being graded good or better.

12. Foundation clients are given effective advice and guidance on specific job applications. However, they do not receive enough planned learning sessions to provide them with the general skills they may need for future job applications.

13. **BTCVE has developed good partnership arrangements related to land-based provision** that provide extensive and valuable project work for clients. It also has good links with two further education colleges. **However, jobsearch activities in land-based programmes do not include sufficiently challenging targets to keep clients focused on their work activities.**

14. **Resources are good in retailing, customer service and transportation.** However, **the range of learning resources is insufficient on foundation programmes**, and the foundation training room at one centre is inadequately resourced. Tutors rely too much on paper-based resources, and some sessions are dull and uninspiring. Not enough use is made of ICT in the delivery of literacy and numeracy training in foundation programmes.

15. The previous inspection identified the weakness of inadequate progress reviews. Reviews have improved and are now satisfactory in retailing, customer service and transportation. Developments have taken place in land-based, ICT and foundation programmes, but concerns relating to target-setting and monitoring remain. **Not enough detail is generally recorded in progress review documents for these areas.**

16. BTCVE has maintained the support it provides to clients, and in some instances has

improved it through the recruitment of new staff. **Support for clients is good in ICT and foundation programmes**, where many clients benefit from effective additional support through the use of a mentoring programme. In retailing, customer service and transportation, help on a wide range of personal problems is available to clients at any time. Clients on all programmes receive satisfactory literacy, numeracy and language support in general, although not all centres have their own specialist support staff.

## Leadership and management

17. **BTCVE has implemented effective post-inspection development planning and good monitoring of progress since the previous inspection.** The current development plan includes all of the weaknesses from the previous inspection report, and targets related to the specific contract requirements of the New Deal programmes for most areas. However, some targets do not recognise local or regional differences and, in some cases, are unrealistic. A quality assurance team has been established to work across the regions to carry out much of the monitoring of improvement.

18. **BTCVE's communications are good.** The company's internal communications are now good, having improved considerably since the previous inspection. The management style is open and staff interviewed feel better informed about what is happening now in BTCVE. Most staff have a good, detailed knowledge of their clients, and communicate effectively and regularly with them. BTCVE has developed good relationships with work-placement providers and communicates well with them. It has strong links with the further education sector through working with local colleges.

19. BTCVE's overall strategy for literacy, numeracy and language support for clients is satisfactory. However, the implementation of the strategy has not been wholly effective in some areas of learning, and not all regions have specialist support staff.

20. **BTCVE has made slow progress in improving its collection and use of data**, an area identified as a weakness in the previous inspection. It has begun to introduce a national management information system to improve the quality of its data collection and analysis. However, collection of data for the reinspection presented significant challenges for BTCVE, and the data presented were insufficiently accurate to allow judgements to be made in most areas of learning. Regions use different local management information systems and the collation of regional information into a national picture is sometimes difficult. Data across the occupational areas are not analysed to allow comparison or evaluation. BTCVE now captures data in relation to equality of opportunity, but most clients are mandatory referrals from Jobcentre Plus, and these data do not have a substantial effect on recruitment.

21. **BTCVE has made good progress in developing approaches to equality of opportunity**, which were identified as inadequate at the previous inspection. Regions use the national equal opportunities plan to support their local plans, which then focus on some of the regional variations. However, these local plans are at an early stage of implementation. Significant progress has been made in staff training. The directors have received appropriate equality training, and most staff have now participated in an

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appropriate awareness-raising training programme that has stimulated discussion in some areas.

22. Access to most sites is limited for clients and staff with restricted mobility. While ground floor accommodation can be arranged when needed in some locations, toilet facilities are generally not designed for disabled clients. Regions have targets in their plans to review and amend some leasing arrangements when timing allows, but progress in this area is generally slow.

23. Clients receive training in equality of opportunity awareness at induction and, in some regions, through the recently introduced one-day awareness training programme. **However, not enough reinforcement of equality of opportunity takes place beyond this for clients or work-placement providers.** The progress review process includes the opportunity to discuss equality issues with clients. These discussions are rarely recorded in detail and are generally not memorable for clients or workplace supervisors. Many clients and some staff have a very basic understanding of equality and diversity. Work-placement providers are now being checked to ensure they have an appropriate equal opportunities policy, and are offered BTCVE's policy if they do not.

24. **BTCVE has made good progress in developing comprehensive and effective quality assurance systems.** Its quality assurance of Jobcentre Plus provision is now satisfactory, having been identified as very weak at the previous inspection. Procedures are in place to raise standards of training, and good arrangements are in place for determining the views of clients and work-placement providers. Changes have started to take effect, and the quality of provision is improving. However, some procedures are not yet fully implemented and in some cases the application of procedures is not thorough enough.

25. Staff from different regions meet three times a year to share good practice. BTCVE's processes for self-assessment and the promotion of continuous improvement were identified as very weak at the previous inspection. New procedures have been introduced which are satisfactory. However, the self-assessment reports are insufficiently evaluative and make insufficient use of data analysis to make judgments on the provision. Internal verification is satisfactory. Verifiers provide appropriate support to assessors and all areas of learning comply with the requirements of the awarding bodies.

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

### Leadership and management

#### Strengths

- effective post-inspection development planning and monitoring
- good communications
- good progress in developing approaches to equality of opportunity
- good progress in developing a comprehensive and effective quality assurance system

### **Weaknesses**

- slow progress in developing collection and use of data
- insufficient reinforcement of equality of opportunity

### **Land-based provision**

#### **Strengths**

- good development of personal and practical skills
- good partnership arrangements

#### **Weaknesses**

- poor rates of progress into employment for New Deal 25+ clients
- insufficient use of challenging targets

### **Information & communications technology**

#### **Strengths**

- good training and learning
- good individual support

#### **Weaknesses**

- poor rates of progress into employment
- insufficiently detailed setting and monitoring of targets

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

#### **Strengths**

- good learning resources
- good development of employment skills
- good individual support

#### **Weaknesses**

- slow progress for most clients working towards NVQ units

### **Foundation programmes**

#### **Strengths**

- good work placements that develop clients' employability skills
- effective literacy and numeracy skills strategy for BET clients

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- good personal support

#### **Weaknesses**

- insufficient target-setting to plan learning and review progress
- insufficient range of learning resources

## DETAILED REINSPECTION FINDINGS

### LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

**Grade 3**

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

#### **Strengths**

- effective post-inspection development planning and monitoring
- good communications
- good progress in developing approaches to equality of opportunity
- good progress in developing a comprehensive and effective quality assurance system

#### **Weaknesses**

- slow progress in developing collection and use of data
- insufficient reinforcement of equality of opportunity

26. Since the previous inspection, BTCVE has implemented effective development planning and monitoring of progress. The company created a comprehensive development plan, covering all the identified weaknesses, soon after the previous inspection. Detailed monitoring has taken place since then. The plan includes targets related to the specific contract requirements of the New Deal programmes in most areas. However, some of the targets set do not take into account local or regional differences, and some are unrealistic. BTCVE now links development planning to a thorough self-assessment process which reflects the 'Common Inspection Framework'. However, its self-assessment process does not focus in detail on the different occupational areas. The group's draft strategic plan now concentrates more on training programmes and the development of life skills, and the board provides a clear strategic direction. Regional managers use the national business plan and the associated operational plan effectively to develop local operational plans that focus on the New Deal programmes. Since the previous inspection, BTCVE has created marketing and equality of opportunity plans which appropriately identify its key priorities in these areas. Staff changes have now taken place, and a quality assurance team has been established to carry out much of the monitoring of improvement across the regions. The managing director has overall responsibility for the operational management of the Jobcentre Plus programmes.

27. BTCVE's internal communication is now good, having improved considerably since the previous inspection. Regular meetings are held within regions, across management groups and in other specialist areas. Most of the more formal meetings are minuted, although minutes are sometimes poorly recorded and action points are not always clearly identified. Formal board meetings are regularly scheduled and discuss an appropriate range of topics relating to the New Deal programmes. The company's

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management style is open, and despite a period of significant change, most staff now feel better informed about BTCVE's activities, and understand their roles clearly. Most staff have a good, detailed knowledge of their clients, and communicate effectively and regularly with them. Clients interviewed say they value the support they receive from BTCVE's staff.

28. Communication with work-placement providers is also good. BTCVE has developed good relationships with work-placement providers across the regions, and communicates with them regularly. Clients are matched to the most appropriate work placement to maximise opportunities for them and the work-placement providers. BTCVE checks employers' premises for compliance with health and safety requirements. It has adequate agreements with work-placement providers which set out BTCVE's minimum requirements. BTCVE now has an appropriate agreement for subcontractors involved in the delivery of training, and is developing more structured systems for monitoring its subcontractors. Partnership arrangements are effective. BTCVE has good links and networking arrangements with an appropriate range of external organisations. It has formed effective relationships with regional jobcentres and is actively involved in their provider liaison and rates advisory groups. BTCVE has strong links with the further education sector through developments with local colleges. BTCVE also benefits from the substantial network of voluntary and community sector relationships across the whole group.

29. BTCVE has a satisfactory staff appraisal process and provides adequate staff development opportunities. It reviews staff members' performance annually and records these reviews appropriately. Staff personnel files contain a wide range of information and their contents vary across regions. Insufficient guidance is provided by the group in relation to what should be kept in the files in terms of good practice and data protection. Staff development activities have recently focused on raising awareness of equality of opportunity. Some activity has also taken place in the teaching of literacy and numeracy, and BTCVE has made a substantial commitment to supporting many staff through teaching qualifications. Staff are at a variety of stages in this development.

30. BTCVE's overall strategy for providing clients with literacy and numeracy support is satisfactory. However, in some areas of learning the implementation of the strategy has not been wholly effective, and the support being offered is not always formally recorded. The regions do not all have specialist support staff.

31. Since the previous inspection, BTCVE has made plans for a new national management information system to improve the quality of data collection and analysis. The new system has been introduced, but progress has been slow. Some technical difficulties have been encountered during the pilot phase of development and solutions to problems are currently being investigated. Regions rely on local management information systems which operate in different ways, and it is sometimes difficult to collate regional information into a national picture. BTCVE continues to focus its use of data on contractual requirements and the financial implications of performance. Some targets are not broken down sufficiently to evaluate detailed aspects of the programmes. No analysis takes place of data between the occupational areas to allow comparison or



evaluation. BTCVE now collects data on equality of opportunity, but most clients are mandatory referrals from Jobcentre Plus and these data are not used to influence recruitment.

## Equality of opportunity

## Contributory grade 3

32. In response to the previous inspection, BTCVE has made good progress in developing approaches to equality of opportunity. It has a national equality of opportunity plan, and has met many of the broad targets in it. Regions use the national plan to support their local plans. Regional staff have been given some guidance by regional directors and managers in developing appropriate, local equality of opportunity plans that focus on some of the regional variations. These local plans are at an early stage of implementation. Most contain targets to reinforce and develop the understanding of clients on short New Deal training programmes. However, the targets are insufficiently detailed. The directors and a specialist topic group have recently received appropriate training in equality of opportunity. Most staff have participated in an appropriate awareness-raising programme that has stimulated discussion in some areas. The training programme is now being delivered as a one-day short course to some clients, and early indications are that clients find it more memorable than previous equality awareness training. BTCVE has an appropriate equal opportunities policy, a complaints procedure, a disciplinary procedure and a new policy on dealing with bullying and harassment. Access to most sites is limited for clients and staff with restricted mobility. Although ground floor accommodation can be arranged in some locations if needed, toilet facilities are generally not designed for clients with disabilities. Regional plans include targets to review and amend some leasing arrangements when timing allows, but progress in this area is generally slow. An audit of accommodation within the BTCV group is at an early stage. Work-placement providers are now being checked to ensure they have an appropriate equal opportunities policy, and are offered BTCVE's policy if they do not have their own.

33. BTCVE has recently reviewed some promotional materials and updated the images they contain to begin to challenge the traditional stereotypes in some of the occupational areas. Posters and notices displayed around most sites are satisfactory, although no promotional material is available in languages other than English. At the time of the reinspection, approximately 95 per cent of clients were white. The New Deal 18-24 programme accounts for 54 per cent of clients, while 46 per cent follow New Deal 25+ and work-based learning for adults programmes. Eighty-five per cent of clients are men.

34. Equality of opportunity training begins at clients' induction and is now being further developed through one-day training programmes. However, equality of opportunity awareness is not sufficiently reinforced beyond this. The progress review process includes the opportunity to discuss equality with clients, but these discussions are rarely recorded in detail and are not memorable for clients or supervisors. Clients and some staff have a very basic understanding of equality and diversity. Some regions incorporate some equality of opportunity discussions into jobsearch sessions, with some useful discussion as a result, but this is not consistent across all regions. Some pilot activity is

taking place and some up-to-date resources on racism are available in three regions, but use of these is at an early stage of implementation.

### **Quality assurance**

### **Contributory grade 3**

35. Quality assurance of Jobcentre Plus provision is now satisfactory. Following the previous inspection, BTCVE established a quality management team, led by the managing director, to develop a new quality assurance system. The team consulted with staff and researched best practice from outside organisations. In April 2003 they introduced new quality assurance manuals covering induction, training, jobsearch and work experience. The manuals set out procedures and provide standard paperwork for every stage of the training process. Good arrangements are in place for determining the views of clients and work-placement providers, and taking them forward for consideration in programme review meetings. Clients are invited to attend these meetings. Clients' entitlements and the support they should receive at each stage of their programme are clearly specified. Procedures are in place to raise standards of training, through improved learning session planning and training materials, and more effective arrangements for observing classroom sessions and providing feedback to tutors. These changes have begun to have an effect on the quality of provision. Records have improved and staff have a better awareness of clients' needs and progress. Tutors are able to look at these needs more effectively in classroom sessions and reviews. For instance, a greater emphasis is placed on the development of communication skills in jobsearch sessions. In the previous inspection, 37 per cent of learning sessions observed were less than satisfactory, compared with 9 per cent during the reinspection. The national quality manager has begun a cycle of audits which will check compliance with the new procedures at each training centre. This process identified unsatisfactory management practice in one centre, and immediate action was taken to rectify it.

36. The introduction of the new quality assurance system has been managed well. The company recognises that the size and complexity of the new system presents a challenge to staff in many training centres. BTCVE's managers have provided training at each regional centre, and offered further ongoing support where required. However, some procedures are not yet fully implemented. For example, in one centre the programme review meetings have not followed the agenda set out in the procedure. Some local centres have not fully implemented the recording systems specified for induction and initial assessment. In some other cases the application of procedures are not thorough enough. For example, in some areas, clients' progress reviews are poorly completed and do not set clear targets. Good arrangements are in place to review the content of the manuals in order to refine the system and simplify procedures. Practitioner forums have been introduced for each area of learning. Staff from different regions meet three times a year to share good practice and develop proposals for improvements to procedures. Some proposals from the first series of forums have already been implemented.

37. Internal verification is satisfactory. Verifiers provide appropriate support to assessors and all areas of learning comply with the requirements of the awarding bodies. Procedures for implementing the requirements and recommendations of external

verifiers were identified as poor at the previous inspection but are now satisfactory. Processes for self-assessment and the promotion of continuous improvement were very weak at the previous inspection. The new procedures are satisfactory. They require each centre to produce a self-assessment report and an operating plan based on the report. These are at an early stage of implementation but have led to targeted action by staff to rectify weaknesses. The reports take into account the views of staff and clients. Local centre reports are used to produce regional and national self-assessments. The first reports provide a generally accurate view of the provision, but are insufficiently evaluative and make insufficient use of data analysis to come to judgments about the provision.

## AREAS OF LEARNING

### Land-based provision

Grade 3

Programmes inspected	Number of learners	Contributory grade
New Deal 25+	86	3
New Deal 18-24	85	3

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

### Strengths

- good development of personal and practical skills
- good partnership arrangements

### Weaknesses

- poor rates of progress into employment for New Deal 25+ clients
- insufficient use of challenging targets

### Achievement and standards

38. Clients develop good personal and practical skills. Project work helps to build clients' self-esteem, motivation and confidence. In one project, clients are given greater independence and carry out a range of activities including planting, fencing, slabbing and maintenance under limited supervision in a local housing estate. This project also involves clients dealing directly with the public. Clients interviewed spoke proudly of the work they have done. Work in groups encourages good development of team-building and communication skills. Clients develop good practical skills through work on a good range of environmental and horticultural activities. In one session, clients set out a garden area for individuals with restricted mobility from a plan that they had devised in a previous background knowledge session. Clients made decisions about the procedure for setting out the garden and were able to realise their design. Clients interviewed said they value the support they receive to develop their skills.

39. BTCVE has introduced its BTCV Institute of Environmental Conservation awards at some centres, which consist of four or five two-day training modules. These training modules are particularly valued by those New Deal 25+ clients. Since their introduction at one centre in September 2003, the retention rates on the New Deal 18-24 option have shown a marked improvement. Clients at another centre are working towards achievement of two units of a level 2 NVQ programme. However, little evidence of portfolio work exists and few clients have successfully achieved the qualification units. At another centre, clients are working towards achievement of horticultural skills tests. These provide a focused range of relevant practical skills. Clients interviewed said they value this regular assessment of their achievements.

40. The rates of progress into employment for New Deal 25+ clients are poor. The proportion of clients progressing into employment at the time of the previous inspection was 14 per cent. This has improved, with 28 per cent of clients who completed their New Deal programme in 2001-02 and 2002-03 progressing into employment. The rates of progress vary considerably between centres. At one centre the current rates of progression are below 10 per cent. The rate of progression into employment for New Deal 18-24 clients is satisfactory, and has improved since the previous inspection to 42 per cent in 2002-03.

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

41. BTCVE has developed good partnership arrangements and has close working relationships with national and local organisations, community groups and charities. Local partnerships include country and urban parks, housing associations and local authorities. These partnerships provide extensive and valuable project work for clients. The work that the clients complete is of real benefit to the community as well as to the clients. For example, one group of clients is carrying out work with the local housing services department by renovating gardens and properties on a local housing estate. Two clients have secured permanent employment with the local authority as a result of this work. Some centres have used an imaginative approach to securing additional resources. Partners and sponsors donate tools and equipment to BTCVE for work that it has carried out. This provides valuable additional resources for the clients to use. BTCVE has good links with two further education colleges. Both provide collaborative training arrangements which offer good progression routes for clients. One college provides relevant training for BTCVE's staff.

42. Training has improved and is now satisfactory. Only one learning session observed at reinspection was graded as unsatisfactory, with five graded as satisfactory. Of the seven learning sessions observed at the previous inspection, one was poor and one was very poor. Each training session has a set of objectives that are shared with the clients. These objectives do not always take account of individual learning needs or encourage tutors to evaluate the training. Tutors do not always check clients' understanding and reinforce learning. Adequate attention is given to health and safety during practical work and detailed risk assessment is carried out before commencement of work. Teams work responsibly in high-risk situations. Clients complete weekly jobsearch activities. The range of teaching strategies used in many jobsearch training sessions is narrow. Clients are not always fully involved in these sessions. Some centres have good strategies to support jobsearch activities. These sessions are structured well using a mixture of national and locally developed learning materials. One centre makes good use of helpful additional activities including quizzes and questionnaires. These effectively reinforce learning and create good discussion points. Good practice is not shared sufficiently across the centres.

43. Staff are appropriately qualified to carry out assessment and have a good range of relevant vocational experience and qualifications. Although few staff are qualified as

teachers, or have a recognised literacy and numeracy support qualification, strategies are in place to rectify this weakness. In some centres this strategy is more advanced than in others. The quality and range of training rooms varies across regions. The best training rooms are bright, lit well and have helpful displays of clients' work and materials to assist them in their jobsearch activities. Some training rooms are of poor quality, untidy and provide an uninspiring learning environment. Many training rooms are located on the first or second floors of buildings and have poor access, particularly for clients with restricted mobility. BTCVE has identified this problem and makes alternative arrangements to enable clients to access training facilities. However, toilet facilities are inadequate. Some centres do not provide enough access to computers and the internet for jobsearch. Tools and equipment adequately meet practical training requirements. Assessment practice is satisfactory in most centres, although assessment criteria are not always shared with clients. Verification practice complies with the awarding body's requirements. One centre has a good monitoring and sampling system in place for the horticultural skills test award.

44. Insufficient use is made of challenging targets during clients' progress reviews and jobsearch activities. Individual learning plans are created during induction. However, these are not used enough to support and monitor training targets. Reviews do not sufficiently focus on what progress has been made or what clients need to do next. Individual targets are not challenging enough. Clients are not involved enough in their reviews. Reviews are scheduled at the start of a client's programme and managed centrally. Jobsearch activities do not provide sufficiently challenging targets to keep clients focused on their work activities. Induction has significantly improved since the previous inspection and is now satisfactory. Clients follow an appropriate, centrally-devised induction programme, which includes an introduction to jobsearch activities and on-site work experience. Induction is supported by standardised materials and learning session plans that are appropriate. All clients receive a fast-track initial assessment of need and further diagnostic assessments are made if required. Literacy and numeracy skills support is satisfactory in most centres. However, when formal support is offered, few clients choose to attend. One centre has a wide range of paper-based material to help clients with filling in forms, spelling and budgeting.

## **Leadership and management**

45. Roles and responsibilities are clearly defined. Communication has improved nationally and locally since the previous inspection. Local communication is effectively maintained through regular, formal, minuted meetings. These use standard agendas and focus on improvements. National meetings have been held for different groups of practitioners, including staff who provide jobsearch sessions. These have been used to share practice to improve the quality of the New Deal programmes. Managers use local data appropriately to monitor performance, although electronically based management information systems are not effectively used to compare performance between regions. Staff have access to good staff development opportunities, although staff at one centre will not start their teacher training until September 2004. All staff receive an annual job performance review in accordance with company policy, which is linked to staff

development.

46. Each centre has a local equal opportunities plan that follows the BTCVE group's national framework. A one-day staff development session has recently been provided for all staff. Equality of opportunity is covered during induction, and includes an introduction to BTCVE's equal opportunities policy. This is not effectively reinforced during progress reviews or jobsearch activities. Some clients have poor recall of equality of opportunity. Diversity is not fully understood by staff and clients. BTCVE's disciplinary rules are used appropriately to deal with racial discrimination.

47. Internal verification practices are satisfactory. The self-assessment process is satisfactory. Staff understand the importance of self-assessment and have contributed to the production of local self-assessment reports. However, the self-assessment report is descriptive and not sufficiently critical. It does not identify all of the key weaknesses found during reinspection. Staff are fully committed to their local self-assessment report, and use it as a guide to improve standards. The self-assessment report is not cross-referenced to the areas of learning or individually graded.

**Information & communications technology****Grade 3**

Programmes inspected	Number of learners	Contributory grade
New Deal 25+	40	3
New Deal 18-24	13	3

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

**Strengths**

- good training and learning
- good individual support

**Weaknesses**

- poor rates of progress into employment
- insufficiently detailed setting and monitoring of targets

**Achievement and standards**

48. The standard of ICT clients' work is satisfactory. Clients make satisfactory progress towards achieving the targets in their individual learning plans. Some clients achieve their planned learning early, and are encouraged to continue and to complete additional modules or units and work towards achieving a full NVQ. Clients' work is neat and tidy and laid out well, but some evidence is not sufficiently varied.

49. New Deal 18-24 clients make poor progress into employment. Thirty-two per cent of clients in 2001-02 gained a job, but in the following year none did. So far in 2003-04, 26 per cent of New Deal 18-24 clients have gained a job, and another 28 per cent are still in learning. Progress into employment for New Deal 25+ clients has improved from 5 per cent in 2001-02 to 18 per cent currently, with another 19 per cent still in learning. Progression into jobs for New Deal 25+ clients was identified as a weakness at the previous inspection.

**Quality of education and training**

50. Training and learning are good on ICT programmes. Tutors work to detailed and comprehensive learning session plans. They take account of clients' different learning styles and prepare their sessions to include tutor delivery, tutor-led discussions, group discussions and individual guidance and support. Tutors are aware of the barriers to learning that some clients face and are sensitive to their needs and requirements. Good use is made of different questioning techniques to check clients' progress, recall and understanding. Clients are encouraged to participate in discussions and their contributions are valued. Tutors use quizzes and multiple-choice questionnaires to



evaluate clients' learning and attainment. Exercises during sessions reinforce learning and help clients to translate background knowledge into practice. Two examples observed were a mail-merge exercise and the design of a pie chart from a spreadsheet. Very good use is made of presentation software that involves the use of colour, images and flying and dissolving text. This form of presentation stimulates and inspires clients to try out the software themselves. Good use is made of resources such as digital projectors and cameras to present information and images in a way that engages clients and motivates them to persevere with their learning. One tutor demonstrated resourcefulness when his computer crashed during his presentation by swiftly moving to using a flipchart and then overhead transparencies to complete the session. The jobsearch sessions are satisfactory. Clients attend for at least two half-days a week to prepare curriculum vitae, write job application letters, check the local newspapers for vacancies and write speculative letters to employers. A comprehensive record of clients' jobsearch activities is kept in their training files.

51. Clients receive good individual support. This strength was identified at the previous inspection. An identified mentor is available to clients either through referral by their tutor or by personal approach. Advice is available on a wide range of subjects, from housing and unemployment benefits to homelessness and drug misuse. Clients interviewed were very aware of this service and valued its confidentiality. Tutors are aware that new clients are apprehensive about compulsory attendance at training programmes. They are sensitive to the barriers and resistance clients exhibit when discussing training options and outcomes. They establish a good rapport with clients and provide individual support and guidance, especially during the first few weeks of the programmes, to ensure that they settle down quickly. Tutors are aware that new clients often lack social skills and confidence. Tutors encourage clients to work in pairs when possible, with the more experienced client helping the newer recruit. Client interviews showed that this instils a sense of pride in the more experienced client and encourages the new client to feel part of the group. If clients complete their qualification units early, tutors encourage them to study for additional units or modules with the aim of achieving a full qualification. Clients interviewed all remarked on how their self-confidence and social skills had improved as a result of the training programme.

52. Training resources are satisfactory. Staff are appropriately qualified and have relevant ICT experience. All classrooms have sufficient workstations to accommodate the number of clients expected, and are equipped with adjustable seating. Most computers have software which is adequate for the qualifications offered. One training centre has only one colour printer. It is situated in the tutor's office and clients are frustrated by having to save their work to a disk and wait for a suitable moment to use the printer. This centre also has only one computer with internet access. This causes further frustration when clients who are doing jobsearch need to access the jobcentre vacancies website while others need to work online towards their ICT qualifications.

53. Initial assessment is satisfactory. Clients' literacy and numeracy skills are assessed when they begin their programme, and a Basic Skills Agency fast-track assessment tool is used to identify clients who need additional learning support. Clients' previous knowledge and experience of ICT is assessed using a self-assessment questionnaire. The

results of the assessment are used to construct an individual learning plan and to identify the appropriate starting point for the client. Arrangements for literacy and numeracy support are satisfactory. Clients who are identified as needing additional support are offered the opportunity to work alongside the BET clients. Few clients, however, take up this option, preferring instead to work with the other ICT clients. The induction programme is now satisfactory, having been identified as a weakness at the previous inspection. Clients attend a two-day induction programme that covers BTCVE's rules and regulations, health and safety and equal opportunities. They complete multiple-choice questionnaires and quizzes that test their knowledge and understanding of the subjects covered, and sign an induction checklist to confirm their attendance and the subjects delivered.

54. The assessment process is satisfactory. Clients are entered for assessment when they and their tutor agree that they are ready. Clients' work is marked and returned quickly, and oral and written feedback is provided in a positive and constructive way that encourages the client to persevere and achieve their qualification. The range of programmes being offered is satisfactory. Most clients who have little or no previous ICT experience are offered an introductory computer literacy course. Clients with previous knowledge and experience follow an appropriate examination-based qualification in ICT. Courses in web page design are available for clients who wish to extend their range of skills in that direction. Plans have already been made to introduce a further qualification from this autumn and a computer literacy and business technology course is being considered as a progression route for new clients.

55. The setting and monitoring of targets during progress reviews is insufficiently detailed. Progress reviews are carried out on time and within contractual timescales, and a new recording document is now used that contains prompts and guidelines for reviewers to follow. However, the short-term targets set are insufficiently specific and measurable to encourage clients to experience and learn new skills, or to build on their existing skills. General targets are not broken down into manageable steps to motivate clients or improve and enhance their learning. Progress review documents do not identify new skills learnt or training received, or reflect the progress clients have made towards achieving the targets set at their previous progress review. The targets set are not followed up at subsequent reviews. The review process was identified as a weakness at the previous inspection.

## **Leadership and management**

56. Regular meetings are held in areas such as standardisation, training and operational management, where minutes are taken and distributed to absent staff. Discussion topics include retention and achievement rates and the achievement of targets. ICT staff in each region relate well to the locally generated self-assessment reports, although they contain no specific reference to ICT and insufficient analysis of data in general. An effective annual staff appraisal system is in place and staff are encouraged to achieve appropriate qualifications with the support of BTCVE. One member of staff has recently obtained a portable appliance testing certificate and now tests all the electrical

equipment in centres within his region. He is also allocated time during working hours to take driving lessons.

57. Internal verification and moderation are satisfactory. A forward plan for internal verification covers all assessors, qualifications and units. The plan includes observations of assessors, questioning of clients and examination of evidence. Feedback, both written and oral, is provided to assessors.

**Retailing, customer service & transportation****Grade 2**

Programmes inspected	Number of learners	Contributory grade
New Deal 18-24	46	2
New Deal 25+	13	2

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

**Strengths**

- good learning resources
- good development of employment skills
- good individual support

**Weaknesses**

- slow progress for most clients working towards NVQ units

**Achievement and standards**

58. Most clients make considerable progress in developing new skills in the workplace and have often increased their workplace responsibilities while on the programme. BTCVE matches its clients with a good range of work-placement providers, including charity shops, furniture stores, DIY shops and warehouses. Work-placement providers are very supportive and give clients a wide range of tasks to develop their employment and personal skills. Clients acquire a range of other skills in BTCVE's training centres to improve employability, including writing letters and using the telephone and ICT equipment. Clients are also offered a number of short courses and certificates on topics including first aid, health and safety, basic food hygiene and lift truck driving.

59. The use and collection of data to provide information on achievement rates have improved since the previous inspection, but is still not reliable enough to support judgements on retention rates. Rates of progression into jobs are satisfactory. Forty-four per cent of New Deal 18-24 clients finishing programmes this year have progressed into jobs, with another 16 per cent still in learning. For New Deal 25+ clients, the rate of progression into jobs is 20 per cent with another 20 per cent still in learning. This is a marked improvement on previous years, when progression rates for New Deal 25+ clients have been as poor as 3 per cent. Clients working towards NVQ units in retailing, customer service or warehousing have a satisfactory range and level of evidence in their portfolios. Evidence includes assessment by observation, client statements and witness testimonies, but very few work-based documents.

### Quality of education and training

60. BTCVE's staff provide good individual support to clients. They make frequent visits to clients in the workplace. Help is given to clients on a wide range of personal problems and is available at any time. Staff collect clients and take them to and from interviews and provide them with new clothes and other personal items such as toiletries. Clients interviewed appreciate all the personal help they receive from BTCVE's staff, and report that this has developed their self-confidence and self-esteem and motivated them to look for employment.

61. Centres have good resources. Staff are very experienced, trained well and take part in regular staff development activities. Most centres provide a good range of learning materials for jobsearch activities and in-house courses. Clients attend their local centre one day each week for jobsearch activities. Tutors help clients to develop the skills required to use the telephone, prepare speculative letters and curriculum vitae and improve their interview techniques. Tutors are appropriately qualified and have developed learning materials to make activities interesting to clients and relevant to their occupational aims. Support for literacy, numeracy and language skills development is satisfactory, and is made relevant to clients' occupational training. The amount of time that clients spend at centres each day varies, but is at least four hours. A few centres run activities for the whole day and offer additional training, discussion and group work in relevant topics, as well as additional individual support.

62. The previous inspection identified the weakness of incomplete planning and review of learning. This area is now satisfactory. All clients receive an induction at the start of the programme, and most clients are involved in the planning of their training. Clients who are not sure which occupational area they are interested in can attend any of BTCVE's available programmes for a few days. Progress reviews are carried out every four weeks, mostly at the work placement but sometimes at BTCVE's centres. Reviews assess the progress clients have made since their previous review, check that targets have been met and examine the reasons if targets have not been met.

63. Most clients working towards NVQ units make slow progress. BTCVE subcontracts the delivery and assessment of NVQ units. Each centre uses a different subcontractor, and one centre uses two subcontractors. The subcontractor at one centre does not allocate an assessor to new clients for up to six weeks, with the assessor then visiting each month. Assessments are not planned in advance, very few targets are set and clients have very little NVQ work to do between assessment visits. Some clients with only one or two weeks left on programme have not completed a single unit and have no further visits from the assessor planned. Clients at another centre had been making good progress, but the subcontractor has had a high turnover of assessors and clients have had two or three assessors over the past six months. The most recent assessor left this subcontractor two months ago and has not yet been replaced. A few clients with one subcontractor are making very good progress and are able to achieve up to five units of an NVQ in the 26-week training period. Assessment and target-setting are planned well.

## **Leadership and management**

64. The previous inspection identified management of the programme as weak. Some subcontractors did not have a formal contract and BTCVE did not monitor the subcontractors. This area is now satisfactory and all subcontractors now have formal contracts. One centre has changed its subcontractor and monitoring of NVQ training and assessment now takes place. BTCVE's centres are aware of the challenges concerning NVQ unit training and assessment and are working with subcontractors to improve the situation. Communication and teamwork in centres are very good. Some regions have more than one centre, or work closely with centres from other regions, and lines of communication are clear. Communication between centres and head office is also good. Staff are kept informed of planning decisions and targets, although most targets concern the performance of centres and not individual members of staff. Staff are involved in the self-assessment process and are able to discuss self-assessment at quarterly staff meetings, and make suggestions for action plans and areas of improvement.

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

Programmes inspected	Number of learners	Contributory grade
New Deal 25+	34	3
New Deal 18-24	22	3

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

**Strengths**

- good work placements that develop clients' employability skills
- effective literacy and numeracy skills strategy for BET clients
- good personal support

**Weaknesses**

- insufficient target-setting to plan learning and review progress
- insufficient range of learning resources

**Achievement and standards**

65. Rates of retention and progression into employment are satisfactory and meet the contractual targets set by Jobcentre Plus. Thirty per cent of the current intake of New Deal 18-24 clients have progressed into jobs, with 18 per cent still in learning. Twenty-one per cent of New Deal 25+ clients have progressed into jobs so far in 2003-04, with a further 23 per cent still in learning. Since its introduction in October 2002, 35 clients on the BET programme have completed a certificate in personal development at entry level with a good pass rate of 86 per cent. The standard of clients' portfolios of assessed work is good. Development of clients' literacy, numeracy and language skills is satisfactory overall. Clients at one centre make good progress, with five being entered for external examinations in literacy and numeracy. At another centre the development of clients' literacy and numeracy skills is insufficient. Learning in these skills is not placed in a relevant context or sufficiently linked to clients' needs. Attendance is unsatisfactory in some classes, with too many clients arriving late for training sessions. Clients in work placements develop satisfactory vocational skills.

**Quality of education and training**

66. Work placements are good and effectively develop clients' employability skills. This strength was identified at the previous inspection and has been maintained. Seventy-one New Deal 18-24 clients took part in work experience between April 2003 to February 2004, and 46 of them gained a job directly from their work-experience placements. A good range of employers offers placements in areas including warehousing, retailing, construction, health and fitness, and administration. Employers work closely with clients

to develop their employability skills and to enable them to gain a good understanding of different occupations. Many BET clients also attend work placements and steadily develop confidence and motivation, together with employability skills. One client interviewed reported that he had developed the confidence to ask questions in the workplace. Another client said that, following a successful interview for a work placement, he no longer felt 'left out' when talking to his friends and family.

67. Support for clients is good. Many clients benefit from effective additional support through the use of a mentoring programme. Clients gain good support in resolving personal matters, including coping with bereavement, budgeting and health-related matters. Staff work with a range of external agencies to meet the individual needs of clients. Employers are sufficiently confident to offer work placements to clients with complex personal and social needs because of the support provided by BTCVE's staff.

68. Training and learning are satisfactory on foundation programmes, and are planned well on the BET programme. Literacy and numeracy development is an integral part of the training for the personal skills qualification. For example, on the day before the Chancellor's budget, clients were learning about different types of taxes. This led into numeracy work as clients calculated the weekly and monthly tax-free personal allowance a single person can claim. Value added tax calculations provided an extension activity for those with higher level skills. In another class the tutor had baked a cake which was used for practical reinforcement of work on fractions. However, many clients in jobsearch classes are not sufficiently challenged. Clients attend jobsearch sessions for at least four hours each week. However, when they have finished looking for jobs in the newspapers they do not have enough further structured activities to do. Clients are given effective advice and guidance on specific job applications, but not enough planned learning sessions are offered to provide them with the general skills they may need for future job applications.

69. Initial assessment of clients' development needs is satisfactory. Clients receive initial screening for literacy, numeracy and key skills, and an interview to discuss personal and employability skills and learning styles. This is not always used effectively to develop appropriate learning plans. Assessment of clients' work is accurate, but not enough written feedback is provided to clients to enable them to make the best progress. This weakness was identified in the previous inspection and has not been wholly dealt with. However, the induction process is much improved since the previous inspection and is now satisfactory. Clients now have a clear understanding of key induction topics including health and safety, equality of opportunity and programme content.

70. Target-setting is insufficiently detailed to plan learning and review clients' progress. Since the previous inspection a lot of progress has been made in this area and monitoring and recording of progress is no longer weak. However, in many cases, the targets in the individual learning plans are not detailed enough to enable clients' progress to be monitored effectively. Reviews for clients on New Deal 18-24 are late. Some clients had waited up to three months before having a review. Targets are too general. For example, targets have included 'to continue work placement on the allotment's outdoor activities' and 'work towards becoming job ready'. Some specific literacy and



numeracy targets are set in some plans, such as: 'learn to add and subtract whole numbers and two digit numbers'. However, in other learning plans the targets are inadequate. New BET clients now have an additional learning plan specific to literacy and numeracy that provides more detailed targets.

71. The range of learning resources provided is not wide enough. The training room at one centre is inadequately resourced. It is inappropriate for group work, not large enough for the numbers of clients who often use it, and has too few basic teaching aids. The jobsearch room has no internet access. Access is provided in the ICT suite but clients' use of this disrupts other learning sessions. Too much reliance is placed on paper-based resources, and some sessions are not sufficiently varied or motivating. ICT is not used enough to support literacy and numeracy training.

## **Leadership and management**

72. Since the previous inspection an effective skills strategy has been developed that provides literacy and numeracy learning through other programme activities. The strategy has been particularly successful on the BET programme but has yet to be fully implemented on the New Deal 18-24 programme. Staff are appraised annually. However, at one centre, appraisals have not been conducted due to staff shortages. Many staff have recently received some basic training in equality of opportunity. Most clients have a basic understanding of equality of opportunity. However, the company's policy is too complex for clients with poor literacy skills. BTCVE has good communications with work-placement providers at a formal and informal level. Employers interviewed said they welcome the professional yet personable style of BTCVE's staff. Monthly formal team meetings enable staff to discuss individual clients' needs. The team meetings are used to discuss progress towards targets in the self-assessment report. However, the self-assessment report is insufficiently evaluative and does not contain a separate section for foundation programmes. Many of the weaknesses identified at the previous inspection, including poor induction and weak assessment, have been remedied. The previous inspection identified a weakness in literacy, numeracy and language skills development and support. This is now a strength for BET clients and is adequate for New Deal 18-24 clients. However, the unreliability of data, a weakness identified at the previous inspection, has not been rectified.