

INSPECTION REPORT

Andrew Collinge

05 September 2003



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 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

Andrew Collinge

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INSPECTION REPORT

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROVIDER

1. Peter Collinge founded the company over 50 years ago in Liverpool. After successfully establishing nationally a chain of hairdressing salons, the company opened its first training school in 1974. The company offered training to traditional apprentices and fee-paying clients who wanted to become hairdressers. The salons and training schools within the group now all trade under the name of Andrew Collinge, Peter's son. The company has four main training centres, three in Liverpool city centre and one in Birkenhead, specifically for learners on the Wirral. Andrew Collinge has a contract with Greater Merseyside Learning and Skills Council (LSC) to offer foundation and advanced modern apprenticeships.

2. The senior management team consists of the two company directors and the deputy training manager. The directors share management responsibilities. One is responsible for business development, recruitment, marketing, equal opportunities and staff development, the other is responsible for company financial policies and management. The deputy training manager is responsible for the planning of training, quality assurance, and learner support, together with three full-time training centre managers and 14 part-time tutor/assessors. There is also an internal verification co-ordinator, three salon co-ordinators and three full-time administrative staff.

3. The Greater Merseyside area has a minority ethnic representation of 2 per cent, according to the 2001 census, compared with approximately 9 per cent for England and Wales as a whole. Liverpool is one of the 20 most deprived districts in England, and has been granted European objective 1 status in recognition of its relative poverty. In April 2002, the unemployment rate in Merseyside was 6.5 per cent, compared with 3.1 per cent nationally. The proportion of school leavers in Greater Merseyside achieving five or more general certificates of secondary education (GCSEs) at grade C or above is poor. In 2002, it was 43 per cent, compared with 49 per cent for England as a whole. The number of school leavers with no qualifications in 2002 was 8.9 per cent, compared with 5.6 per cent nationally.

SCOPE OF PROVISION

Hairdressing & beauty therapy

4. Andrew Collinge has 110 modern apprentices, of whom 80 are foundation modern apprentices and 30 are advanced modern apprentices. All modern apprentices work towards key skills at an appropriate level as an integral part of their programme. Advanced modern apprentices are also working for the technical certificate. All learners are employed. Thirty-eight per cent are based in Andrew Collinge salons, the remainder are in hairdressing salons throughout the Greater Merseyside area. Off-the-job training is provided at the four training centres on either a day-release basis in years one, two and three, or a block placement in year two. Learners can enrol for additional courses,

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workshops and master classes to enrich their training. Most assessment is carried out in the four company training centres, although many employers do assess in their salons. Learners are visited frequently for support and assessment. These visits are flexible to meet the needs of the learner. Learners' progress reviews take place every eight weeks and involve the work-based mentor or employer.

ABOUT THE INSPECTION

Number of inspectors	4
Number of inspection days	16
Number of learner interviews	20
Number of staff interviews	15
Number of employer interviews	8
Number of locations/sites/learning centres visited	20

OVERALL JUDGEMENT

5. The quality of the provision is adequate to meet the reasonable needs of those receiving it. More specifically, Andrew Collinge's leadership and management are good. Arrangements for equality of opportunity are satisfactory and quality assurance is good. The quality of work-based learning in hairdressing programmes is outstanding.

GRADES

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

Leadership and management	2
Contributory grades:	
Equality of opportunity	3
Quality assurance	2

Hairdressing & beauty therapy	1
Contributory grades:	
Work-based learning for young people	1

KEY FINDINGS

Achievement and standards

6. **Retention and achievement rates for modern apprenticeship programmes are good.** Between 1999-2000 and 2000-01, retention of foundation modern apprenticeship improved from 53 per cent to 56 per cent and achievement from 45 per cent to 51 per cent. Of those learners starting in 2001-02, over 60 per cent are still in learning. On the

advanced modern apprenticeship programme, of the 64 learners who started their training between 1999-2000 and 2001-02, 64 per cent have been retained and 47 per cent have successfully completed the full apprenticeship framework.

7. Learners' practical skills are very well developed. First- and second-year learners in particular demonstrate standards of hairdressing significantly above the level to be expected for the amount of time they have been on programme.

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	3	4	2	0	0	0	9
Total	0	3	4	2	0	0	0	9

8. Andrew Collinge provides particularly good training for all learners. Of the nine training sessions observed, 78 per cent were graded good or better. Teaching was often dynamic, tutors were skilled in using a range of strategies to fully engage all learners through demonstration, debate and discussion. Learners are very well motivated and extremely satisfied with the support they receive.

9. On- and off-the-job training are very well linked. The salon co-ordinator visits all employers to plan and agree on-the-job training plans. Plans are negotiated to ensure that off-the-job training is reinforced and developed appropriately in the salon.

10. Particularly impressive is the planning, delivery and assessment of key skills training. All learners are initially assessed, and the results are used to plan their key skills training programme. Learners who are exempt from key skills training are encouraged to work towards the wider key skills, or higher-level communication and application of number and information technology (IT). Key skills are fully integrated, and assessment is signposted within NVQ assessment to avoid unnecessary duplication. A dedicated key skills internal verifier co-ordinates and quality assures the teaching and assessment of all key skills programmes.

11. Andrew Collinge provides a very good standard of resources to support learning. The accommodation and equipment used throughout the training are very good. Salon facilities provide good, commercial environments where staff display very good technical standards. All teaching and training areas within Andrew Collinge salons were well resourced with televisions, videos and computers to support learners in their training.

12. Internal verification is comprehensive and thorough. The procedures are well established, planned and documented. Internal verification is regularly scheduled in the training centres and in the salons. Workshops and meetings are held at regular intervals to re-emphasise the standards expected and share good practice.

13. Learners have the opportunity to widen their skills and knowledge by attending a number of additional activities. Training in commercial product lines and techniques,

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such as colouring, cutting, barbering, make-up and manicure, is offered to complement their training programmes. **The company does not sufficiently recognise the skills and experience gained by learners who have attended the occupational taster programmes.**

14. **Learners receive good support throughout their training.** Those with additional literacy, numeracy and language needs are identified through initial assessment. Staff provide very good individual support. Learners interviewed, spoke very well of the support they received with their literacy, which has helped them with their written assignment work. Learners with physical and emotional needs are also well supported and their programmes are adapted to ensure that their needs are adequately met.

Leadership and management

15. **The leadership of Andrew Collinge is good.** The company has a business plan with objectives clearly linked to training. The directors and senior managers have a clear sense of purpose, and staff are highly motivated and determined to see learners achieve. Staff share ideas and good practice, as well as concerns about learners, which enables them to act quickly to lend support.

16. **Training is well planned and well managed.** Staff have clearly defined roles and responsibilities. Employers are fully involved in the delivery, evaluation and assessment of learners' training and competences. The salon co-ordinator works closely with employers to plan on- and off-the-job training and employers are kept fully informed about learners' progress through the eight-week review process and monthly documented feedback. **Targets are set for learners and each training salon carefully monitors learners' progress.**

17. Andrew Collinge has a clear strategy for the management, development and delivery of key skills training. The initial assessment of key skills is thorough, and they are fully integrated with the NVQ programme and the technical certificate for the advanced modern apprenticeship programme. NVQ assessment is carefully planned to include key skills evidence.

18. Andrew Collinge does not have a formalised strategy for literacy and numeracy support, although staff do provide good support for learners with additional learning needs. Learners have a thorough diagnostic assessment and additional learning needs are identified. Individual learning plans are developed, and staff provide good individual support on a weekly basis. Additional sessions are provided to reinforce the development of practical skills and tutors closely supervise written work.

19. Staff are well qualified and have a broad range of industrial experience which they use to good effect in the training programmes. The company has a systematic approach to appraisal and staff development. The staff training and development policy is linked to the company's business goals, and includes procedures for recruitment and selection of assessors, appraisal and further training. **Target-setting is not used to monitor personal performance objectives.**

20. Andrew Collinge manages its physical resources efficiently. The company's financial controls are good, and the directors set and closely monitor operational, staffing and consumables budgets. The training salons are well appointed and a range of good-quality products are available for learners to use. A good range of clients is available for practical training. Health and safety is satisfactory and learners are aware of requirements and procedures.

21. Andrew Collinge is committed to equality and fairness in its working practices. It has introduced a number of strategies to promote diversity, including links with local organisations, and business plan targets. The company has an equal opportunities policy statement, which includes key aims and objectives, supported by separate policies for grievances, bullying, harassment, appeals and discipline. Policies and procedures are clearly written and are appropriate for the learners. **Equal opportunities data are not used to evaluate the equal opportunities policies or set targets for improvement.** Equal opportunities is not promoted effectively with employers, or monitored and reinforced in the workplace.

22. **The company has a firmly established culture of continuous improvement.** Self-assessment is satisfactory. The development plan is regularly monitored and reviewed, outcomes of actions are clearly stated. Learner, employer and staff feedback is used effectively to evaluate training. **Andrew Collinge has comprehensive, clearly written, quality assurance procedures** which cover all the main operational areas of the business. Training is extensively monitored and evaluated by regular feedback from staff, learners and employers. Action plans are widely used to resolve identified issues, and improve training.

23. The company has clearly defined procedures for the formal observation of off-the-job training. All tutors are observed, graded and given detailed feedback. Inspectors judged standards of teaching and learning to be particularly good. Observation of on-the-job training tends to be more informal. Assessors and verifiers visit learners on style nights, and if training is taking place, this will be observed, together with assessment activities. No written observation records are kept.

24. Procedures for internal verification are good. Each training salon has an assessment team including an internal verifier. New assessors are shadowed for a period every two months during their first 12 months. The remaining assessors are observed twice a year. Through meetings, salon visits and training sessions, internal verifiers standardise assessment decisions and update assessors and verifiers. There are regular visits to other organisations' salons, to ensure that the standard of training and assessment is acceptable.

The following strengths and weaknesses were identified during this inspection:

Leadership and management

Strengths

- good management of training
- well-planned and well-structured learner progression strategies

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- effective management strategies to promote diversity
- good quality assurance arrangements
- good use of feedback to contribute to continuous improvement

Weaknesses

- weak use of target-setting
- insufficient promotion of equality of opportunity with employers
- insufficient use of performance data for equal opportunities

Hairdressing & beauty therapy

Strengths

- good retention and achievement rates
- excellent development of practical skills
- particularly good standards of teaching and learning
- very good links between on- and off-the-job training
- particularly impressive planning, delivery and assessment of key skills training
- comprehensive and thorough internal verification
- good training support for learners
- very good resources to support learning

Weaknesses

- insufficient recognition of previous skills and experience

WHAT LEARNERS LIKE ABOUT ANDREW COLLINGE:

- practical teaching sessions
- learning new skills
- support from tutors
- they feel privileged to be training with the Andrew Collinge organisation
- opportunities for high-profile photographic work, through shows and demonstrations

WHAT LEARNERS THINK ANDREW COLLINGE COULD IMPROVE:

- the amount of practical work in the first year of training
- the opportunities for assessment in the first year of training

KEY CHALLENGES FOR ANDREW COLLINGE:

- ensure that the recognition of previous skills and experiences is established in the first year of the training programme
- continue plans to deliver the Afro-Caribbean unit to ensure diversity and opportunities for learners.
- provide more focused target-setting for managers and assessors to better prioritise learner achievement
- continue to build upon the existing internal quality assurance monitoring system by further sharing roles and responsibilities
- increase the reviews and monitoring of equal opportunities with learners and employers

DETAILED INSPECTION FINDINGS

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Grade 2

The following strengths and weaknesses were identified during this inspection:

Strengths

- good management of training
- well-planned and well-structured learner progression strategies
- effective management strategies to promote diversity
- good quality assurance arrangements
- good use of feedback to contribute to continuous improvement

Weaknesses

- weak use of target-setting
- insufficient promotion of equality of opportunity with employers
- insufficient use of performance data for equal opportunities

25. The leadership of Andrew Collinge is good. The company has a business plan with objectives clearly linked to training. The directors and senior managers have a clear sense of purpose, and staff are very well motivated and determined to see learners achieve. Staff work effectively in teams, in the training salons and head office. Staff share ideas and good practice, as well as concerns about learners, which enables them to act quickly to support learners. Senior staff work very closely together and meet weekly to review training, while managers visit the training salons every week to monitor the training programmes.

26. Training is well planned and managed. Staff have clearly defined roles and responsibilities. Background knowledge sessions are well structured and tutors follow standardised lesson plans. There are effective links between Andrew Collinge and employers. Employers are fully involved in the delivery, evaluation and assessment of learners' competence. The salon co-ordinator works closely with employers to plan on- and off-the-job training, and to agree who will be responsible for each aspect of the learners' training. Employers are kept fully informed about learner progress through the review process, additional visits and the company newsletter. Feedback is provided to each satellite training centre. Salon managers are creative and helpful in their efforts to accommodate learners' needs. Learners are able to move around different salons in the organisation to gain a good range of experience in hairdressing.

27. Assessment is carefully planned and is carried out in the workplace and in the training centres. Targets are set for learners and each training salon carefully monitors learner progress. Monitoring charts are used effectively as a motivational tool in all training salons. The new progress review process has increased the emphasis on continuous progress.

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28. Andrew Collinge has a clear strategy for the management, development and delivery of key skills training. Initial assessment of key skills is thorough, and tutors use the results to plan each learner's key skills programme together with any additional support which may be required. Learners have good access to support and guidance in the training centre and in the salons. Key skills are fully integrated with the NVQ programme and the technical certificate for the advanced modern apprenticeship programme. NVQ assessment is carefully planned to capture key skills evidence.

29. Learners are strongly encouraged to develop their practical skills. There is a commitment to developing learners through career progression. Well-managed salons provide a wide range of experience and development opportunities for learners. A significant number of learners have progressed through their apprenticeship training to complete assessor awards. Many have then gone on to join the training team on a part-time or full-time basis, progressing to senior positions.

30. Staff are well qualified and have a broad range of industrial experience which they use to good effect in the training programmes. The company has a systematic approach to appraisal and staff development. The staff training and development policy is linked to the company's business goals, and includes procedures for recruitment and selection of assessors, appraisal and further training. All staff have an annual appraisal to review their performance, and staff are encouraged to develop their skills and experience through additional training. A number of staff have achieved specific qualifications, but target-setting is not used to monitor personal performance objectives. The company has recently been accredited as an Investor in People, a national standard for improving an organisation's performance through its people.

31. Andrew Collinge manages its physical resources efficiently. The company's financial controls are good, and the directors set and closely monitor operational, staffing and consumable budgets. The training salons are well appointed and a range of good-quality products are available for learners to use. There is a good range of clients for practical training. Health and safety is satisfactory and learners are aware of requirements and procedures. A procedure for risk assessment in all salons has recently been introduced and this has been effective where used.

32. The company has recently introduced a new management information system for collecting and recording learner data. Information about starts, completions, achievement and early leavers is available. Analysis of learners leaving the programme before achieving their learning targets has led to changes to the initial recruitment and training of learners. This has resulted in a 50 per cent reduction in the number of early leavers from the current learners, compared with the 2002 starts. The company monitors retention and achievement rates for all training programmes.

33. Much of the planning and monitoring of performance tends to be through informal meetings between senior managers which are not always recorded. The directors are involved in the process, but there is no succession planning in place to protect the quality of training if they were no longer involved for any reason. There are company

retention and achievement targets, but they tend to be company-wide targets. There are no specific retention and achievement targets for tutors, or individual salons.

34. Andrew Collinge does not have a formal strategy to provide the necessary support for learners with additional learning needs in literacy, numeracy or language skills. There are currently no staff with relevant qualifications. Despite this situation, staff provide good support for learners with additional learning needs. Learners have a thorough diagnostic assessment and additional learning needs are identified. Individual learning plans are developed and staff provide good individual support. Additional sessions are provided to reinforce the development of practical skills and tutors closely supervise written work, providing feedback to improve literacy skills.

Equality of opportunity

Contributory grade 3

35. Andrew Collinge is committed to equality and fairness in its working practices. The company has an equal opportunities policy statement, which includes key aims and objectives, supported by separate policies for grievances, bullying, harassment, appeals and discipline. The training manager provides strategic direction on equality and diversity and the company policy is reviewed annually. Policies and procedures are clearly written and are appropriate for the learners. All learners have a copy in their portfolios and employers have a copy posted in their salons.

36. The company has introduced a number of management strategies to promote diversity, some of which are already proving to be effective. Targets for participation and achievement have been set in the business plan to increase the numbers of men and minority ethnic learners over the next three years. Effective links have been established with Connexions, local schools and organisations which specialise in minority ethnic recruitment. Some progress is evident, with an increase in male learners, who currently make up 10 per cent of all learners, and a small number of learners from minority ethnic groups. More recently, three new staff have been recruited to develop, train and promote Afro-Caribbean hairstyling. The company also offers barbering courses for learners. The company is positive in its approach to the recruitment of learners with additional learning and physical difficulties. One training salon has been adapted to provide assessment opportunities for learners with restricted mobility. Learners with dyslexia, literacy needs, profound hearing problems and severe long-term physical and emotional problems have all been recruited and received excellent support to complete their programmes and work in the salons.

37. All learners have good equal opportunities training during induction. Equality of opportunity features strongly in the employment rights and responsibilities aspect of the technical certificate. This is not a requirement for level 2, but it is still covered in foundation modern apprenticeships. Learners have a good knowledge of the company's bullying, complaints and appeals procedures. Attendance is closely monitored by staff and prompt action is taken to inform managers of absences.

38. Equal opportunities is not effectively reinforced and monitored in the workplace. Assessors do not adopt a standard approach to the promotion of equal opportunities

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with employers. The reinforcement and monitoring of equal opportunities through the learner progress review process is weak. A few initiatives have been introduced with employers to raise the profile of equal opportunities, either through training or helping them to develop their own approach to equal opportunities. Some employers' understanding of equal opportunities is weak.

39. A range of equal opportunities data is collected, largely based upon applications, returns, interviews, training places offered and location. Data are not yet used to evaluate the effectiveness of the equal opportunities policies, or to set further targets for improvement. Retention and achievement rates, early leavers and destinations are not categorised by gender, ethnicity or disability. There are no comparisons between salons, in terms of the performance of specific groups of learners.

40. Company marketing material remains stereotypical and makes no mention of Andrew Collinge being an equal opportunities training provider.

Quality assurance

Contributory grade 2

41. Andrew Collinge has recently formalised its quality assurance arrangements. The company now has comprehensive, clearly written quality assurance procedures, which cover all the main operational areas of the business. Procedures specify who is responsible for actions, and all documents are controlled and held centrally. Training is thoroughly monitored and evaluated by regular feedback from staff, learners and employers. Questionnaires cover all key aspects of the training process, from induction to exit interviews. Action plans are used effectively to resolve identified issues and improve training. Over the past eight months, further improvements have been made to assessment planning, induction, progress reviews and the planning of training.

42. The company recently introduced an eight-week occupational taster programme to help learners make informed decisions about pursuing a career in hairdressing. Learners are placed in salons and work as part of the salon teams. The number of learners leaving the programme early has been reduced by over 60 per cent based on starts for 2002.

43. Andrew Collinge has a firmly established culture of continuous improvement. Staff are involved in the annual self-assessment process. The development plan is a working document, and staff are aware of their responsibilities and specific targets. The programme is regularly monitored and reviewed, outcomes of actions are clearly stated and a colour-coding system ensures that actions are prioritised. Retention and achievement targets are set for each training programme.

44. Procedures are clearly defined for the formal observation of off-the-job training. All tutors are observed and graded, and detailed feedback is provided. Individual development plans are agreed with staff, issues are identified and appropriate training is provided.

45. Internal verification procedures are good. Each training salon has an assessment team with an internal verifier. New assessors are shadowed for a period every two

months during their first 12 months. The remaining assessors are observed twice a year. Through meetings, salon visits and training sessions, internal verifiers standardise assessment decisions and update assessors and each other. There are regular visits to other organisations' salons to ensure that the standards of training and assessment are consistent with general requirements.

46. There is no formal observation of on-the-job training. Assessors and verifiers visit learners on style nights and if training is taking place this will be observed informally, together with assessment activities. There is no formal recording of the observation, or feedback to the trainer.

AREAS OF LEARNING

Hairdressing & beauty therapy

Grade 1

Programmes inspected	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Work-based learning for young people	110	1

The following strengths and weaknesses were identified during this inspection:

Strengths

- good retention and achievement rates
- excellent development of practical skills
- particularly good standards of teaching and learning
- very good links between on- and off-the-job training
- particularly impressive planning, delivery and assessment of key skills training
- comprehensive and thorough internal verification
- good training support for learners
- very good resources to support learning

Weaknesses

- insufficient recognition of previous skills and experience

Achievement and standards

47. Retention and achievement rates for modern apprentices are good. Of the 53 foundation modern apprentices who started in 1999-2000, 53 per cent were retained and 45 per cent successfully achieved the full apprenticeship framework. In 2000-01, the retention rate improved to 77 per cent and full framework achievement increased to 51 per cent. On advanced modern apprenticeship programmes, of the 64 learners who started their training between 1999-2000 and 2001-02, 64 per cent have been retained and 47 per cent have successfully completed the full framework.

48. Andrew Collinge promotes excellent development of learners' practical skills. First- and second-year learners, in particular, demonstrate standards of hairdressing significantly above the level to be expected for the amount of time they have been on programme. All learners are extremely confident and apply their background knowledge and understanding effectively in practical work. Learners' written work is accurate and detailed.

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										
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
	Number of starts	27		23		12		29									
Retained*	2		13		2		21	72									
Successfully completed	2		13		2		15	52									
Still in learning	25		3		2		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																	
Foundation modern apprenticeships (FMA)	2002-03		2001-02		2000-01		1999-2000										
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
	Number of starts	22		86		73		53									
Retained*	1		5		56		28	53									
Successfully completed	1		5		37		24	45									
Still in learning	14		53		13		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

Quality of education and training

49. Andrew Collinge provides particularly good training for all learners. Of the nine training sessions observed, 78 per cent were graded good or better. Teaching was often dynamic, tutors were skilled in using a range of strategies to fully engage all learners by demonstration, debate and discussion. For example, in an introductory lesson on colouring, learners were immediately put into small groups to collect images depicting warm and cold tones. Discussion then took place about how these tones can alter the appearance of a client's skin. This was shared with the rest of the group by group presentations. Good tutor to learner ratios allow effective individual support. Learners are very motivated and very satisfied with the contact and support they receive during background knowledge and practical sessions. On- and off-the-job training are well linked. The salon co-ordinator visits all employers to plan and agree on-the-job training plans. These plans are negotiated to ensure that off-the-job training is reinforced and developed appropriately in the salon. Assessors monitor progress during their eight-weekly visits and visits to style nights.

50. The planning, delivery and assessment of key skills training is particularly impressive. All learners are initially assessed, and the results are used to plan their key skills training

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programme. If learners are exempt from key skills because of their GCSE grades, they are encouraged to work towards the wider key skills, or higher-level communication and application of number and IT. All learners complete information technology, even though this is not a requirement for their modern apprenticeship framework. Key skills training is fully integrated and assessment is signposted within NVQ assessment and technical certificate assessment to avoid unnecessary duplication. Andrew Collinge has developed standardised teaching and support materials to ensure consistency in the teaching of key skills. A dedicated key skills internal verifier co-ordinates and quality assures both the teaching and assessment of all key skills programmes. Trainers have either completed the key skills practitioner award or the key skills qualification. Learners have a good understanding of key skills and can talk confidently about the importance and impact of key skills in their training.

51. Learning resources are very good. The accommodation and equipment used throughout the training are very good. Facilities in Andrew Collinge training salons are excellent. Those learners not employed in Andrew Collinge salons are placed in good, commercial environments. Learners are experienced in using professional product ranges and in retail sales. All teaching and training areas within Andrew Collinge salons are well resourced with televisions, videos and computers to support learners in their training. Teachers are well qualified and regularly update their skills and knowledge through continuous professional development. Practical assessments are conducted in a professional manner.

52. The company has introduced a six- to eight-week occupational taster programme, which provides learners with a good insight into the demands of a hairdressing career. Learners are then able to make a more informed decision about joining a modern apprenticeship programme. During this time, skills are developed and some learners make rapid progress, but they are not assessed until several months later. Their prior learning is not recognised sufficiently. This problem has been identified by learners and staff. Strategies have now been introduced to enable learners with good manual dexterity and basic hairdressing skills to be fast-tracked during the early stages of their training.

53. Internal verification is comprehensive and thorough. The procedures are well-established, well planned and well documented. Internal verification is regularly scheduled in the training centres and in the salons. Comprehensive documents clearly show thorough verification, including a wide range of assessment methods. The internal verifier communicates frequently and effectively with the assessment team. Workshops and meetings are held at regular intervals to re-emphasise the standards expected and to share good practice.

54. Learners have the opportunity to widen their skills and knowledge by attending a number of additional activities. Additional training in commercial product lines and techniques such as colouring, cutting, barbering, make-up and manicure are offered to complement their training programme. Attendance at hair shows and photographic shoots are available for those learners keen to progress within the artistic team.

55. Learners have good training support throughout their programme. Learners with additional literacy and numeracy needs are identified by initial assessment. Staff provide very good support, often on an individual basis. Learners speak very well of the support they receive with their literacy skills, which has helped them to complete their written assignment work. Learners with physical and emotional needs are also well supported and their programmes adapted to ensure that their needs are adequately met. For example, a learner with profound hearing problems who lacked confidence when dealing with clients has received continuous individual support with cutting and colouring, and extra training days have been arranged each week to develop her confidence. This learner has since completed the foundation modern apprenticeship framework and is now in full-time employment with Andrew Collinge, working on an individualised programme, including an NVQ at level 3, and wider key skills.

Leadership and management

56. The leadership and management of the programme are very good. The training manager oversees business development, recruitment, marketing, equal opportunities and staff development. The deputy training manager is responsible for the delivery of training, quality assurance and learner support. All assessors attend quarterly meetings to discuss issues and share good practice. The company is extremely responsive, and effective action has been taken where problems have been identified. For example, a revised approach to dealing with the delivery of key skills training a year ago has been successful and has contributed to most of the existing foundation modern apprentices completing their portfolios in advance of the NVQ.

57. Standardised company systems and procedures are followed by all staff. Good teamwork and a commitment to continuous improvement are evident. Learners' performances are regularly monitored, and areas for improvement are discussed at progress reviews. Curriculum development is shared within the team, and all tutors are actively involved in reviewing and evaluating courses and the effectiveness of the curriculum. Managers have very good links with employers. Through self-assessment and development-planning, the company has identified weaknesses and made improvements.