

INSPECTION REPORT

HYA Training Limited

22 August 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

HYA Training Limited

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INSPECTION REPORT

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROVIDER

1. HYA Training Limited (HYA) is a wholly owned subsidiary of a registered charity called the Humberside Youth Association, which aims to promote the welfare and development of young people in Humberside. The charity has been involved in training since the 1970s. HYA provides work-based learning for young people from its centre on an industrial park approximately one mile from the centre of Kingston-upon-Hull. This includes foundation and advanced modern apprenticeships, and training for national vocational qualifications (NVQs) in care, retail and customer service, and business administration. In 2001 the company began a Life Skills programme for learners at foundation level. It plans to expand this provision through the new Entry to Employment (E2E) programmes which started in the month of the inspection.

2. The company has two directors, who have overseen the move to the present premises and carried out a restructuring of the company's staff. The managing director is responsible for the overall direction of the company and takes an active role in developing its links with other agencies and organisations. The operations director oversees the day-to-day management of the company and line manages all staff. In practice, the two directors work closely together and their roles often overlap. Both are members of the company's board. The board meets every two months. Its main role is to monitor the work of the HYA and to offer strategic guidance and support to the directors. The HYA employs 19 staff, apart from the directors, of whom 16 are directly involved in the delivery of training, and three are administrators. All but four of the staff are full time.

3. HYA funds its training provision through the Humberside Learning and Skills Council (LSC). There is no subcontracted provision. Hull is an area of relative economic deprivation. The proportion of school leavers achieving five or more general certificates of secondary education (GCSEs) at grades C or above is very low. In 2001 it was 27.5 per cent, compared with 47.9 per cent in England as a whole, and 43 per cent for the Yorkshire and Humberside region. The minority ethnic population of Hull comprises 2.3 per cent of the population, compared with 6.5 per cent in Yorkshire and 9.1 per cent in England as a whole.

SCOPE OF PROVISION

Business administration, management & professional

4. There are 31 learners in this area. Four are advanced modern apprentices, 10 are foundation modern apprentices, three are following an NVQ programme at level 1 and 14 are on the NVQ programme at level 2. Learners are in work placements or in employment with a wide range of different local organisations. This allows HYA to match the placement to the learner's area of interest. Off-the-job training is provided at HYA's premises just outside Hull city centre. Learners are supported by two full-time

administration learning consultants, a part-time key skills liaison officer and a literacy, numeracy and language specialist. They are able to gain qualifications in basic computer literacy, an examination-based computer qualification and health and safety, in addition to their modern apprenticeship framework or NVQ.

Retailing, customer service & transportation

5. There are 42 learners in this area, two advanced modern apprentices, six foundation modern apprentices taking retailing NVQs at level 2, 10 learners working towards retail NVQs at level 2, and 19 working for the distributive operations NVQ at level 1. There are also five customer service foundation modern apprentices. Of the 36 retailing learners, 26 have additional learning or social needs. The programme duration for NVQ training and foundation modern apprenticeship programmes is 12 months and 14 months for advanced modern apprenticeships. Eight of the retail learners and all six on the customer service NVQ are employed with local companies. Most of the occupational training is delivered in the workplace, although HYA deliver a rolling programme of approximately monthly training sessions at their training centre, which learners can attend if they feel the training is relevant.

Health, social care & public services

6. At the time of the inspection there were 48 learners following care programmes: eight are advanced modern apprentices, 11 are foundation modern apprentices, 10 are on NVQ programmes at level 3 and 17 are on level 2 NVQ programmes. Most of the learners are employed in nursing homes and in residential care. A few learners are employed in residential facilities for adults with physical and/or learning disabilities. Some learners are on work placement in local nursing and residential homes. Some off-the-job training takes place at HYA, although many learners receive their off-the-job training with their employers and work-placement providers. Assessment takes place in the workplace, mainly by assessors employed by HYA. Learners with additional support needs receive support from HYA in literacy and numeracy.

Foundation programmes

7. HYA has provided a Life Skills programme since July 2002. Learners attend the training centre for a minimum of 16 hours each week. The programme lasts for an average of 14 weeks and learners can join at any time during the year. The purpose of the programme is to help young people to develop personal skills and confidence, and to prepare them for level 1 NVQ training, or employment. The programme is also designed to give learners opportunities to work on community projects and in supportive work placements with local employers. Learners are recruited through Connexions. There are currently 13 learners on the programme. A range of subjects is covered which includes literacy and numeracy, basic computer literacy, first aid, health and safety, and manual handling. Learners have opportunities to gain qualifications in some of the subjects they study, most of them being certificates of attendance awarded by HYA.

ABOUT THE INSPECTION

Number of inspectors	5
Number of inspection days	16
Number of learner interviews	62
Number of staff interviews	32
Number of employer interviews	19
Number of locations/sites/learning centres visited	20
Number of visits	19

OVERALL JUDGEMENT

8. The quality of the provision is adequate to meet the reasonable needs of those receiving it. HYA's leadership and management are good, its approach to equality of opportunity is satisfactory, and its quality assurance arrangements are good. The quality of work-based learning in retailing, care and foundation programmes is satisfactory and in business administration, it is good.

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

Business administration, management & professional	2
Contributory grades:	
Work-based learning for young people	2

Retailing, customer service & transportation	3
Contributory grades:	
Work-based learning for young people	3

Health, social care & public services	3
Contributory grades:	
Work-based learning for young people	3

Foundation programmes	3
Contributory grades:	
Life Skills	3

KEY FINDINGS

Achievement and standards

9. Retention and completion rates are generally satisfactory on modern apprenticeship programmes. In business administration, results have been good, though few modern apprentices have been recruited in the current year. In retailing there has been insufficient completion of frameworks so far, but most learners are still on programme, and in care completion rates are satisfactory, though progress is often slow and learners do not complete training until some time after the planned end of their programmes. Progression to employment is good in both care and business administration programmes.

10. **Achievements rates are unsatisfactory on NVQ programmes.** A very high proportion of learners have additional learning and social needs. For example, in retailing programmes, 26 of the 34 learners have additional needs. These learners are judged to be unready for the demands of a modern apprenticeship programme, so a high proportion of HYA's learners are on NVQ programmes. Generally, retention rates are poor, leading to poor achievements. In response to the needs of its learners, HYA began offering foundation level training through a Life Skills programme in 2001. Retention and achievement rates on the Life Skills programme are satisfactory, though few learners have so far progressed to employment.

11. **Learners achieve good standards in business administration.** Portfolios contain good quality-evidence from a wide range of sources. In care and retailing programmes, the standard of work seen by inspectors was satisfactory.

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
Business administration, management & professional	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Retailing, customer service & transportation	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
Health, social care & public services	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	2
Foundation programmes	0	0	0	1	2	1	0	4
Total	0	0	3	2	2	1	0	8

12. Five of the eight learning sessions observed were satisfactory or better. Two were unsatisfactory and one was poor.

13. **Learners receive good support in all programmes.** They are visited very frequently in the workplace. HYA's staff get to know individuals well and make great efforts to meet their needs. Initial assessment is well conducted and the results are, in most cases, used effectively to draw up individual learning plans. **However, the use of targets for Life Skills learners is poorly developed.** Many are not aware that they have a learning plan, and the targets set for them are not precise enough to guide learning effectively.

14. **HYA has well-established and good relationships with many local employers,** enabling it to offer a wide range of work placements in all the vocational training areas. Many employers have sound experience of working with learners, and a good understanding of the NVQ process. Inspectors found a number of examples of employers making special arrangements to provide a wide range of experience to the learners.

15. HYA makes satisfactory provision for learners with literacy and numeracy needs. These are identified through diagnostic assessment during induction. Learners are then directed to specialist off-the-job courses, linked to the basic skills curriculum. Communication between the basic skills tutor and programme area assessors are good, enabling the learners' progress to be monitored and encouraged through the progress review process. However, there is a need to improve the quality of target-setting in literacy and numeracy.

16. **HYA's assessment practice is good.** It is frequent, available when require and well recorded. Vocational and key skills assessments are well linked. However, in care, there is too much reliance on written assignments.

17. **In business administration, key skills training is generally well integrated with the NVQ learning programme,** enabling evidence to be gathered simultaneously for both qualifications. In care, key skills training is not so well integrated. HYA has recently appointed a key skills co-ordinator, which has improved procedures for administering the programme. HYA uses a diagnostic test to determine each learner's areas of weakness and provides workbooks and individual tuition to resolve them.

18. Off-the-job training is satisfactory in care and retailing, and business administration. Staff are well qualified and have good training resources. However, in most areas, few learners attend the off-the-job training sessions, as they are not a mandatory requirement. HYA's staff deliver training sessions in the workplace, where appropriate.

19. **Training sessions in Life Skills are poorly planned.** The teaching methods are not appropriate to meet the needs of the learners. Teachers spend too much time talking and do not provide sufficient practical activities. The individual needs and learning styles of learners are not taken into account when sufficiently designing training sessions. Teachers do not link training sessions by subject to engage the learners and reinforce their learning.

Leadership and management

20. **HYA's internal communications are good.** There is an open style of management and a well-structured schedule of meetings which ensures that **all staff are well aware of the company's aims and progress towards them.** The sharing of good practice throughout the company is promoted by verifiers meetings, and by cross-company working groups. There is a good management information system to provide reliable and timely data for these meetings.

21. **Accommodation and learning resources are good.** Learners are visited very frequently in the workplace and benefit from good off-the-job facilities. Computer facilities are good and there are specialist resources for foundation learners.

22. **Careers advice is not adequate to meet the needs of learners.** Many learners are in employment and do not consider that they need advice, and some receive informal advice from staff. However, there is no formal opportunity for young people to reflect on their career plans and to receive impartial advice about their best career path.

23. **HYA gives serious consideration to equality of opportunity. All staff have regular training** and equal opportunities is regularly discussed in staff meetings. All learners have a good awareness of grievance and complaints procedures. They receive an introduction to equality issues during their induction. **However, this provides only a superficial understanding** and is not sufficiently reinforced throughout the learners' programmes.

24. **Quality assurance arrangements are good.** The company's procedures cover all stages of training, and also arrangements for staff recruitment and induction. Regular quality assurance meetings are held, involving all staff, to ensure that the company's systems are well understood and correctly implemented. All systems are regularly audited and also subject to spot-checks by the directors.

25. **The self-assessment process is integrated with quality assurance procedures, making it an effective means of identifying weaknesses and making plans to tackle them.** The self-assessment report provided and accurate assessment of the company and its operations. Recent improvements in areas such as learner support and key skills have resulted from the self-assessment process.

26. The company has sound procedures for internal verification which are monitored by the managing director.

27. Within the quality assessment process there are arrangements for the monitoring of the quality of training through observation. **However, these arrangements are not systematic, and therefore do not ensure that all aspects are regularly evaluated. The results of observations are not used to identify patterns of weakness or training needs throughout the company.**

The following strengths and weaknesses were identified during this inspection:

Leadership and management

Strengths

- good communication of the company's strategy and ethos
- good accommodation and training resources
- comprehensive equality of opportunity training for staff
- well-managed quality assurance procedures
- good self-assessment process

Weaknesses

- inadequate careers advice for learners
- poor reinforcement of learners' understanding of equality of opportunity
- unsystematic approach to the observation of training

Business administration, management & professional

Strengths

- very good on-the-job training
- effective support for learners' personal development
- good integration of key skills training with vocational training

Weaknesses

- poor retention and achievement rates on NVQ programmes

Retailing, customer service & transportation

Strengths

- effective support to meet learners' needs
- very good work placements

Weaknesses

- low achievement rates

Health, social care & public services

Strengths

- good teaching and practical assessment
- good support for learners
- well-established partnerships with employers

Weaknesses

- slow completion of programmes by some learners
- over-reliance on written evidence in portfolios

Foundation programmes

Strengths

- good range of additional qualifications
- effective initiatives to widen participation
- good support for learners

Weaknesses

- inadequate planning of learning
- inadequate use of individual development plans

WHAT LEARNERS LIKE ABOUT HYA TRAINING LIMITED:

- 'friendly and helpful staff'
- 'staff make sure you know what you're supposed to do'
- 'the good range of additional courses you can take'
- 'I'm able to learn alongside my work'
- 'I can always contact my assessor if I need help'
- 'the facilities in the centre, including the computers'
- 'I enjoyed the joint sports event with students from the local college'

WHAT LEARNERS THINK HYA TRAINING LIMITED COULD IMPROVE:

- the amount lunch-time activities
- the organisation and punctuality of learning sessions in Life Skills
- the level of guidance after finishing qualifications
- the notice given of attendance at the training centre
- the health and safety sessions
- the feedback given by the internal verifier

KEY CHALLENGES FOR HYA TRAINING LIMITED:

- improve the retention and achievement rate of learners on NVQ programmes
- develop and improve the delivery of the Life Skills provision
- improve guidance services for learners
- monitor and enhance strategies for improvements to quality of provision

DETAILED INSPECTION FINDINGS

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Grade 2

The following strengths and weaknesses were identified during this inspection:

Strengths

- good communication of the company's strategy and ethos
- good accommodation and training resources
- comprehensive equality of opportunity training for staff
- well-managed quality assurance procedures
- good self-assessment process

Weaknesses

- inadequate careers advice for learners
- poor reinforcement of learners' understanding of equality of opportunity
- unsystematic approach to the observation of training

28 HYA has good internal communications. All members of staff understand the company's aims and strategy and feel that they have a part to play in developing them. The directors of the company have developed an open management style through which they maintain regular contact with all the staff, and actively monitor the work of each team. HYA's staff feel that directors and managers are accessible and prepared to listen to concerns and suggestions. There is a structured schedule of meetings that covers all aspects of the operation. There are general communications meetings, regular meetings of each programme area, and working parties for key skills, quality assurance, and equality of opportunity. Meetings are well structured and minuted, with clearly defined action plans agreed. All assessors and verifiers meet regularly to discuss assessment issues and share good practice.

29. The company has developed an effective management information system which provides timely and accurate information about the progress of individuals and of learners in each programme area. Targets for progress and achievement of learners are set for each assessor, and discussed regularly at 'projection' meetings with the directors. Discussion at staff meetings often focuses on measures to improve retention and achievement. However, these have not been fully effective. Retention and achievement rates are satisfactory for modern apprentices, but much poorer for NVQ learners. The company's strategy is to expand foundation and E2E provision in order to provide more effectively for the needs of these learners.

30. The company provides good facilities and resources for training. Staffing resources are good for each programme. Learners receive very regular and frequent visits in the workplace, generally well in excess of the number required by the company's contract with the local LSC. The company's premises are bright and modern and present a good

image to learners and visitors. Training rooms are well equipped with visual aids, including an interactive whiteboard. There is a specific classroom dedicated to the learners on the Life Skills programme, which the learners have decorated, and which contains a range of learning resources. In general, teaching resources are satisfactory.

31. All staff are appraised annually by one of the directors. The process is well conducted. The appraisee completes a self-appraisal form before the appraisal interview. The meeting is well recorded, with supportive feedback and clear action plans. Relevant staff development is often agreed at these meetings, and then included in HYA's overall staff development plan. As the company recognised in its self-assessment report, appraisal meetings do not make use of the company's business plan targets in setting individual's targets. This matter is now being resolved.

32. Support for the development of learners' literacy and language skills is satisfactory. Learners are given diagnostic assessments at the start of their programmes, which are used to develop their individual learning plans. Assessors are aware of individual's needs and provide support where required. HYA has provided a placement for a trainee basic skills teacher for one year, in order to improve the support for learners with poor literacy and numeracy skills. These learners attend the HYA centre for additional training, delivered individually or in small groups, each week. Although the delivery of this support is satisfactory, individual learning plans for literacy and numeracy and language skills are poorly developed and do not set clear targets. Attendance at the support sessions is very variable, and was poor during the week of the inspection.

33. Careers advice for learners is inadequate. Some learners are employed and do not consider that they need advice and others receive advice informally from tutors, employers and supervisors. There is no formal opportunity for young people to receive impartial advice and there is no careers resource within the company for them. Learners are not sufficiently encouraged to consider their options and define a course of action. Those learners interviewed stated that they have not been offered guidance in this area. Some learners who are approaching the end of their programmes are unclear about their future. HYA has a good relationship with the Connexions service, but no formal link to provide careers guidance.

Equality of opportunity

Contributory grade 3

34. HYA has an equal opportunities policy with clearly defined aims. All staff are made aware of the policy and its requirements at their induction. Understanding of both the policy and the wider implications of equal opportunities are specifically discussed at regular staff workshops. Staff feedback is considered at each workshop with future proposals for training, and recommendations for further improvements. These are acted on by the senior management. Feedback from these events is also used to develop resources.

35. Equality of opportunity is covered at learners' inductions, where learners receive a booklet containing policies and procedures, although many learners have a poor recollection of the subject. Learners' worksheets from induction demonstrate a limited

understanding of equality of opportunity: most learners explain it merely as treating everybody in the same way. Questions about equality of opportunity are included in progress reviews to ensure that the learner is able to raise any issues that they are concerned about. A checklist has been devised to help staff ensure that all aspects are covered. Despite these measures, equality of opportunity is sometimes not given sufficient attention at reviews. This is reflected in the review record sheets where comments are often minimal.

36. HYA requires employers to have a policy for equality of opportunity, and checks this before the employer is used for a placement. On occasions, establishments are used which have no equal opportunities policy. In these instances, the company is asked to accept HYA's policy, but this cannot be effectively enforced, as many of the learners are employed before joining HYA.

37. Learners and staff are fully aware of HYA's complaints procedure. It is clear and well written, and many learners were able to tell inspectors exactly what action they would take if they had a complaint. Complaints are recorded in a complaints book, which also documents the actions taken.

38. Data about the nature of the intake of learners are collected and analysed to reveal instances of under-represented groups. Staff receive monthly reports, which indicate, for example, that both male learners, and learners from minority ethnic communities are under-represented on HYA's programmes. There are no minority ethnic learners. There are strategies in place to attract more male learners to administration and care programmes. A male learner has agreed to represent the company and to go into schools to promote the training programmes. HYA has active involvement with two local high schools to target male learners. HYA's advertising and marketing literature includes images of black and Asian learners, and makes it clear that applications are welcome from all sections of the community. However, the company has not set specific measurable targets to increase the number of learners from these under-represented groups. Access to HYA's building, for learners with restricted mobility, is good and there are accessible toilet facilities.

Quality assurance

Contributory grade 2

39. HYA has a manual of quality assurance procedures which covers each stage of training, and also staff recruitment and induction. The manual includes a Guide to Good Practice, which provides general guidance on the implementation of the procedures in an easy and comprehensible form. Each manual includes examples of the relevant documents. However, the procedures are not signed and dated, and it is difficult to be sure which is the latest version of a document or form. Staff have a good understanding of quality assurance procedures, which is regularly checked and reinforced. Changes in the procedures, and ideas for further improvements, are discussed at quality assurance workshops which are held twice a year. After a recent discussion the format of individual learning plans was changed to make it easier for learners to understand. Staff complete questionnaires after each workshop, enabling directors to check understanding of the system and to identify any areas where further training is required. Directors interview

each assessor monthly to monitor the progress of their learners. This enables support needs to be identified and additional resources allocated where necessary. For example, a learner who needed to improve typing skills to remain at her placement was provided with a touch-typing course at a local college.

40. The self-assessment process is well established at HYA Training, and it forms an integral part of the quality assurance system. All staff are involved through a series of meetings and an 'awayday' specifically arranged for this purpose. Inspectors judged that the self-assessment report provides a sound and accurate picture of the company and its operations. Their grades matched with the self-assessment grades in all but one case. Any weaknesses identified during this event are taken forward to the company's development plan, which sets out actions for the coming year; and progress is reviewed regularly. Recent improvements resulting from this process include changes to the management and organisation of key skills. A more efficient system for accrediting learners' prior achievements has been set up, and improved tracking of key skills progress has made it easier to provide additional help to learners who are experiencing difficulty. These measures have improved key skills achievements.

41. Arrangements for internal verification are good. One of the directors acts as lead internal verifier and there are sufficient qualified verifiers in each area of learning. All assessors and verifiers meet every two months to discuss assessment and verification. These meetings enable staff to receive updates on the requirements of awarding bodies, and provide a forum for sharing good practice between programme area teams. As a result, a number of forms and processes have been improved and harmonised throughout the company. Verification activities are well planned and well documented, and verifiers provide good feedback to assessors. However, some learners were unaware of the verification process and had not met, or received feedback from, the internal verifier.

42. HYA observes training activities as part of its quality assurance process. Observers complete a form which gives useful feedback to the member of staff observed. HYA also records the observations carried out by outside agencies, such as those by college tutors visiting staff who are trainee teachers. The approach to the evaluation of training activities is unsystematic. There are no written procedure and no formal planning processes to ensure that all members of staff and all aspects of training delivery are regularly evaluated. The outcomes of observation are discussed with individuals, but the results are not analysed to identify general patterns of weakness, or training needs.

AREAS OF LEARNING

Business administration, management & professional

Grade 2

Programmes inspected	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Work-based learning for young people	31	2

The following strengths and weaknesses were identified during this inspection:

Strengths

- very good on-the-job training
- effective support for learners' personal development
- good integration of key skills training with vocational training

Weaknesses

- poor retention and achievement rates on NVQ programmes

Achievement and standards

43. Retention and achievement rates are satisfactory on modern apprenticeship programmes. All of the 2000-01 intake of advanced modern apprentices completed their full modern apprenticeship frameworks. Only one advanced modern apprentice has been recruited in 2002-03. Retention and achievement rates on the NVQ programmes are poor. On the NVQ training programme, retention has fallen from 38 per cent in 2000-01 to 27 per cent in 2001-02. So far in 2002-03, there has been a small improvement, but only 50 per cent of learners who started on the programme are still attending. The weakness in retention and achievement rates was identified in the self-assessment report.

44. HYA is taking active steps to improve retention and recruit more learners to the modern apprenticeship programmes. For example, all potential learners are interviewed by specialist administration staff to ensure that they fully understand all aspects of the programme before they join. Exit questionnaires are now sent to all leavers and those that are returned are analysed, though insufficient use has been made of the analysis. HYA's strategy is to differentiate more clearly between those who can benefit from a modern apprenticeship programme, and those for whom the new E2E programme is most suitable. It is too soon to assess the effectiveness of these initiatives.

45. The standard of work in learners' portfolios is good. Learners take pride in their work and in the in-house certificates awarded. Many learners have gained additional qualifications in basic computer literacy and health and safety certificates. There is a good range of evidence in the portfolios, much of which comes from direct observation in the workplace. Useful feedback is provided to assist the development of learners. Assessors log all available evidence from an observation and are developing a more

holistic approach to assessment.

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											
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number of starts	1		7		11											
Retained*	0		3		11	100										
Successfully completed	0		3		11	100										
Still in learning	1		3		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											
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number of starts	13		8		7											
Retained*	1		3		3	43										
Successfully completed	1		3		2	29										
Still in learning	8		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																
NVQ Training																
	2002-03		2001-02		2000-01											
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number of starts	28		19		34											
Retained*	0		3	16	13	38										
Successfully completed	0		3	16	13	38										
Still in learning	15		2	11	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

46. Learners are provided with particularly effective work placements. On-the-job training is well in excess of the requirements of the NVQ or modern apprenticeship framework. Some employers offer the opportunity for job rotation, providing a wider range of learning and assessment opportunities. Several supervisors have given learners additional responsibilities; this is leading to increased motivation and self-esteem. One

learner has been trained in the use of a desktop publishing software programme and is taking a substantial role in the production of HYA's in-house news sheet. Learners feel able to ask for help and advice when given new tasks.

47. HYA gives strong support to learners' personal development. Assessors and trainers know their learners and their personal circumstances well. Considerable efforts are made to match the needs and the aspirations of each individual when planning training and finding work placements. In one case, a learner with a disability had a long-standing ambition to work with a particular organisation. This organisation had not previously worked with HYA. Within two days, a supportive placement had been arranged. This has contributed to a marked increase in the self-esteem of the learner and in his confidence in HYA to help him achieve more in the future.

48. Assessors have a wide knowledge of external agencies working in the area and use them extensively to benefit individual learners. HYA has a good range of work-placement opportunities. Learners who find that a placement is not suitable can usually be accommodated elsewhere. Programmes of study can be changed if necessary, where a learner's job role changes, for example between business administration and customer service.

49. Learners have a clear understanding of their long- and short-term targets and what must be done to achieve them. They are aware of off-the-job training opportunities to provide background knowledge for NVQs and key skills and to gain additional qualifications. Learners and employers together decide which of these sessions the learner should attend. Key skills training is integrated effectively into the programmes of learning. Modern apprentices and their supervisors understand the relevance of these skills and are familiar with the format and standards of the qualification. Some supervisors identify opportunities for learners to acquire key skills evidence. Assessors link evidence from the workplace to the NVQ and to key skills, to create a holistic qualification.

50. Off-the-job training sessions are satisfactory. The accommodation is bright and attractive and there are adequate learning resources for administration programmes. Learners have access to a well-equipped computer suite and to an interactive whiteboard in one of the training rooms. Handouts and other learning resources produced by the staff are of a good standard. Staff are suitably qualified and knowledgeable in their subject areas. There is clear evidence of appropriate and regular continuing professional development. The ratio of staff to learners is sufficiently good to allow for frequent visits to learners in the workplace and for individual coaching and extra help for learners who need it.

51. All learners have a one-day induction, usually at HYA's premises. The content is appropriate. Learners produce written answers to questions to demonstrate that they have understood various aspects of the induction, including equal opportunities.

52. Learners have regular access to support for their literacy and numeracy needs. Individual needs are regularly reviewed and support amended as necessary. All materials

are matched with the core curriculum. The administration staff team and the member of staff with specific responsibility for literacy and numeracy support communicate well. Arrangements to assess literacy and numeracy needs during induction are adequate.

53. Arrangements for progress reviews and assessments are satisfactory. Action-planning is carried out at each review. Reviewers are supportive, but not sufficiently active in reinforcing equal opportunities or health and safety issues in the workplace. The review documentation reflects this. Most supervisors make every effort to attend the reviews. Workplace supervisors get a copy of the review document, but not of the detailed action plan.

Leadership and management

54. HYA's management has recognised the weaknesses in retention and achievement in this area and has developed strategies to resolve them. Many of the learners recruited have additional learning and/or social needs which present barriers to their learning. HYA has developed a new foundation programme to meet the needs of those learners who are not yet ready for the demands of NVQ programmes. The company is further developing this provision through E2E. Procedures for induction and initial assessment have been improved, and particular care is taken to provide regular and frequent support to learners in the workplace, so that problems which might affect their place on the programme are identified as soon as possible.

55. The working relationships between members of staff on the administration team are strong, leading to a coherent and consistent approach to learners. Documents monitoring learners' progress is completed well and reviewed regularly. Good practice from this area is passed on to the wider team through well-developed communication systems. Good opportunities exist for the effective exchange of information and ideas. All staff contribute to the self-assessment process and use it to set targets for improvement. The self-assessment report gave an accurate description of the scope and quality of the provision.

56. Internal verification systems and practice are satisfactory. Verification is planned to take place throughout the programme and is carried out by appropriately qualified staff. All records are complete and up to date.

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

Programmes inspected	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Work-based learning for young people	42	3

The following strengths and weaknesses were identified during this inspection:

Strengths

- effective support to meet learners' needs
- very good work placements

Weaknesses

- low achievement rates

Achievement and standards

57. Of the 17 foundation modern apprentices who have been on the programme in the past two years, three have successfully completed their framework and 11 are still in learning. Over the past three years only eight advanced modern apprentices have been recruited, of whom four have been successful and two are still in learning. These results are satisfactory.

58. NVQ achievements are poor. Of the 40 learners who started in 2001-02, eight completed their qualification with two others still in learning. In the current year, almost half of the 58 learners have already left the programme, of whom only two have achieved their qualifications. Many NVQ learners face considerable barriers to learning, as a result of poor previous experiences in education and training or social difficulties. The standard of work in learners' portfolios is satisfactory.

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

LSC funded work-based learning																
Foundation modern apprenticeships (FMA)																
	2002-03		2001-02													
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number of starts	12		5													
Retained*	1		5													
Successfully completed	1		2													
Still in learning	10		1													

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

LSC funded work-based learning																
NVQ Training																
	2002-03		2001-02		2000-01											
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number of starts	58		40		32											
Retained*	2		9		6	19										
Successfully completed	2		8		6	19										
Still in learning	27		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

Quality of education and training

59. HYA offers effective pastoral, occupational, and literacy and numeracy support to meet the learners' needs. Regular visits, usually fortnightly, are made to the workplace, and extra visits can be made at any time if learners require them. Action plans are written at every visit, which learners find very useful in helping them to maintain progress. Assessors have re-worded some of the background knowledge questions to make them easier for learners to understand. Learners appreciate the support and the help they receive. If they choose to move work placements for any reason, the assessors find alternative appropriate placements. Twenty-six of the retailing/distributive operations learners have literacy and numeracy and, or social needs, and the effective support given to them by HYA staff is essential to keeping them in training.

60. Employers and work-placement providers are very supportive to the learners. They consider carefully how best to support those with basic skills and/or social needs, to allow them to gain confidence and the necessary skills. Supervisors have a good understanding of the NVQ programme. Some hold assessor awards and although they are not currently assessing, because of the demands of their own job roles, their knowledge of the NVQ process benefits the learners. Many of the employers have been associated with HYA for a number of years and have developed excellent working

relationships with the company. Progress reviews are carried out four-weekly and involve the work-placement provider. These are satisfactory.

61. Inductions and initial assessments are adequate. Induction emphasises understanding of the NVQ, as well as equality of opportunity and health and safety. All learners can recall attending the induction sessions and finding them useful. A skills test is given to those learners with no GCSE qualifications. The results of the tests are used to determine the programme and the NVQ level for the learner. Any additional support needs are identified and support is arranged. A further diagnostic test for key skills is also carried out if required.

62. Training in the workplace is satisfactory. Employers and workplace supervisors are familiar with the NVQ requirements and ensure that learners receive appropriate training. HYA's staff conduct training sessions at the training centre and in the workplace, covering areas such as security, till-handling and life skills. Learners attend those sessions dealing with subjects which are not covered in their on-the-job training. The delivery of training is satisfactory. Learning materials are adequate, although some of the handouts are not up to date and not very interesting. For example, the handouts on legislation refer to the Sale of Goods Act, 1979 and the Trade Descriptions Act, 1968, but do not include details of other more recent legislation. The handout on credit card transactions is old and its style is uninteresting. No information is given about more modern computerised authorisation methods. Teaching methods are satisfactory, but the aims and objectives of each session are not always clear, or linked to practical workplace skills.

63. The training centre has good resources, including an interactive whiteboard and computers. The ratio of staff to learners is good. Two members of staff are currently responsible for the 34 retailing learners. The six customer service learners are the responsibility of the administration staff.

64. Literacy and numeracy support is available to all learners with any identified needs. Learners feel that the support they receive is appropriate to their needs and is effective in helping them to develop their abilities and skills. No learners have English as their second language, therefore no specific arrangements are made for this. Key skills arrangements are satisfactory. Portfolios are produced mainly through evidence gathered in the workplace. Accreditation of prior learning is carried out and happens where appropriate.

65. The assessment process is satisfactory. Assessments are carried out regularly in the workplace, using a range of methods which include observation, witness statements and tests of background knowledge. Assessment is well planned and learners understand the process, as the assessors take time to explain clearly what is required.

Leadership and management

66. The area of learning is managed effectively. Staff have regular meetings to discuss the programme and the progress of individual learners. Staff feel that the recent introduction of the E2E programme will allow them to offer appropriate training and support to some learners who are not yet ready to work in the retailing industry.

67. Staff have received training about equal opportunities and check this aspect during learners' progress reviews. Learners know their rights and responsibilities and are aware of the procedures if they have any problems.

68. Staff were involved in the self-assessment process and identified the key strengths and weaknesses. The grade given was the same as the proposed inspection grade.

69. Internal verification is carried out three times during the learners' time on programme. Standardisation meetings for each area of learning are held regularly, in addition to the generic internal verifier meetings. The process is satisfactory.

Health, social care & public services**Grade 3**

Programmes inspected	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Work-based learning for young people	48	3

The following strengths and weaknesses were identified during this inspection:

Strengths

- good teaching and practical assessment
- good support for learners
- well-established partnerships with employers

Weaknesses

- slow completion of programmes by some learners
- over-reliance on written evidence in portfolios

Achievement and standards

70. Overall retention and achievement rates are satisfactory. The completion rate for modern apprentices during 2000-01 was 75 per cent, although only 13 per cent of these learners completed within the planned duration. Eighty per cent of this group progressed into employment. Completion rates have improved for foundation modern apprentices, with 60 per cent of learners completing their frameworks in 2001-02. On the NVQ at level 2 programme, the achievement rate is improving and is satisfactory at 56 per cent in 2001-02.

71. Some learners are making slow progress towards the achievement of their qualifications. Learners' portfolios contain a range of evidence, including witness testimonies, observations and learners' projects. However, the assessment process does not use the evidence fully to assess all elements of the qualification. The integration and assessment of key skills varies and some learners experience a delay in starting and completing key skills.

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											
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number of starts	8		14		8											
Retained*	5		5		6	75										
Successfully completed	0		2		6	75										
Still in learning	5		3		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	11		10		8		10									
Retained*	0		6		4	50	5	50								
Successfully completed	0		6		4	50	0	0								
Still in learning	9		2		0	0	0	0								

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

LSC funded work-based learning																
NVQ Training																
	2002-03		2001-02		2000-01											
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number of starts	43		54		39											
Retained*	0		27		19	49										
Successfully completed	0		30		19	49										
Still in learning	27		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

Quality of education and training

72. HYA provides a lot of good training and assessment. All the observed sessions were good. Lessons are well planned and delivered and meet the needs of learners. There are clear schemes of work and structured assessment activities. Questioning is used effectively to assess and promote learning. Assessments are challenging and enable learners to demonstrate skills learned and to identify future learning needs. Learners have the opportunity to attend additional training courses which include health and safety, moving and handling and information and communications technology (ICT).

73. Learners receive good support. Assessors make frequent and regular workplace visits, at least monthly, and weekly if necessary. Assessors are also readily available over the telephone. Learners and employers comment positively about the speed of response to requests for support. Learners unable to complete their programme within the planned duration are given help and support to continue with their programme and to complete it. Learners with specific support needs are helped to take part in training.

74. Partnerships with employers are well established. HYA's assessors work closely with work-based assessors to ensure consistency of assessment and to offer support. Managers comment on the quality of training delivery and the responsiveness of HYA in resolving weaknesses or complaints. HYA welcomes employees of local care establishments to the monthly off-the-job training planned for learners.

75. Learners have access to adequate resources. Desk and laptop computers are readily available for use by learners and the teaching rooms have some good resources such as an interactive whiteboard. There are sufficient books, videos and training resources. Staff are sufficiently qualified to meet the needs of the learners and the programmes.

76. Initial assessment varies. Most learners are expected to complete an initial literacy and numeracy assessment. The results are used to identify and support additional learning needs. Support for learners is provided on an individual basis. Some employed learners have had insufficient or no literacy and numeracy assessments. Learners with level 3 qualifications do not always have a literacy and numeracy assessment.

77. Learners receive some poor guidance at initial interviews and when reaching the end of their programmes. Some learners with advanced modern apprenticeship entry qualifications are placed on foundation modern apprenticeship programmes, and some are poorly informed about the requirements of the framework. Progression opportunities and routes are not discussed sufficiently. Some staff are unaware of entry requirements and learning options for leavers wishing to access further training.

78. There is an over-reliance on written evidence in learners' portfolios. Learners write accounts of communication difficulties and personal hygiene, even though these can be assessed in the workplace. They write answers to written questions that could be asked orally, and assessed in the workplace. Assessors observe and assess learners well and make valid judgements of their skills. They produce useful written reports.

Leadership and management

79. HYA's staff work as a team. Staff have well-defined roles and workloads are monitored. All new staff have a supportive induction, and their work is monitored through regular appraisal.

80. The self-assessment report accurately reflected the range of training provision. Most key strengths and weaknesses have been identified within the report, together with key actions to be taken. Staff are fully involved in the self-assessment process.

81. Internal verification is satisfactory. It is well planned at regular team meetings and the findings of the internal verifiers are shared throughout the company. Learners are aware of the role of internal verifiers, but few have experience of an internal verifier verifying workplace assessments, or providing feedback about their written work. Similarly, employers and supervisors are unaware of the internal verification of work-based assessments.

Foundation programmes**Grade 3**

Programmes inspected	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Life Skills	13	3

The following strengths and weaknesses were identified during this inspection:

Strengths

- good range of additional qualifications
- effective initiatives to widen participation
- good support for learners

Weaknesses

- inadequate planning of learning
- inadequate use of individual development plans

Achievement and standards

82. The overall retention and achievement rates are satisfactory. Of the 36 learners who began the programme in the 2001-02 contract year, 44 per cent were retained and completed their planned learning. None, however, gained employment, although some learners transferred into level 1 NVQ training programmes at HYA. Forty-four learners joined the programme during 2002-03. So far this year, 45 per cent have completed their planned learning and a further 30 per cent are still in learning. Eleven per cent of the leavers have gained employment, 32 per cent are unemployed, 7 per cent have transferred to further education and 5 per cent have moved to NVQ programmes with other training providers.

83. Learners benefit from a wide range of off-the-job activities which introduce them to work effectively. However, they do not have sufficient opportunities for work experience.

84. All learners have opportunities to take a variety of short programmes for which in-house certificates of attendance are awarded. These include first-aid, health and safety, Life Skills, and manual handling. Learners also have the chance to work for an external qualification in computer literacy. Some learners have obtained few, if any, certificates previously. The prospect of obtaining certificates which recognise their achievements enhances their motivation and encourages them to work hard to ensure successful outcomes.

The following table shows the achievement and retention rates available up to the time of the inspection.

LSC funded work-based learning																
Life Skills																
	2002-03		2001-02													
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number of starts	44		36													
Retained*	24		16	44												
Successfully completed	20		16	44												
Still in learning	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

85. The company took positive and effective action to widen participation by introducing a Life Skills programme to its range of courses in 2002. The programme has been designed to support disadvantaged learners and to prepare them primarily for entry into NVQ at level 1 training programmes, or into employment. Many of the learners who are referred to the programme by their Connexions personal advisers have experienced difficulties which have reduced their educational achievements and hindered their personal development. For example, some learners have additional learning and/or social needs, others have under-achieved at school because they did not attend regularly. The Life Skills programme gives learners a good opportunity to work in a supportive learning environment with understanding tutors. It also enables them to assess the different career options available to them and to make informed choices based on their newly acquired knowledge and skills.

86. Learners speak of their increased self-confidence, improved self-esteem and enhanced personal effectiveness as a result of the help they receive while on the programme. They are well supported by tutors who help them with their learning and with their personal difficulties. Three tutors are identified as key workers for Life Skills learners. Each tutor is responsible for, and gives good support to, a small group of learners. This includes providing good information and advice on issues such as finding suitable accommodation, teenage pregnancy, and drug awareness. There are good links with a range of external agencies who can also advise on these topics when specialist help is needed. There are also very good links with Connexions personal advisers who regularly visit the training centre to offer help and advice to learners. Learners praise the staff's commitment and appreciate the support they receive. They particularly enjoy the off-site activities which make a very good contribution to their interpersonal skills and self-confidence. Recently, they have visited York and participated in two sports events with local college learners and with HYA's staff. Eighty per cent of learners who completed an assessment questionnaire said that they could get help from their tutors for any difficulties they had, while 83 per cent said that they could obtain advice about training

and job opportunities from tutors.

87. HYA has a satisfactory range of learning resources for learners. There is an adequate number of computers with up-to-date programs, including word-processing, spreadsheet and database applications. Learners may also use the internet under the supervision of a tutor. The computer rooms are light and spacious and the equipment is suitably arranged. The literacy and numeracy learning materials are appropriate and they have recently been added to and updated. As new materials are introduced, the company assesses their suitability for Life Skills learners. Learners with mobility difficulties can access the ground-floor Life Skills room and a computer room. There is, however, no lift access to the first floor.

88. Learners are satisfactorily assessed when they join the programme, although they are unnecessarily given two different literacy and numeracy tests. The test results are used to identify their literacy and numeracy weaknesses and to indicate where tuition is needed.

89. HYA's planning of training is unsatisfactory. Tutors have devised an interesting and appropriate range of topics for the Life Skills programme, but have not given sufficient attention to ensure that the training delivery meets the needs and interests of each individual learner. The topics are not sufficiently co-ordinated to make them coherent and meaningful for the learners. For instance, during the inspection when learners' were taught about safe working practices and the personal consequences of injuries, there were no references to the previous day which was devoted to disability awareness. Similarly, when considering disability awareness, there were no references to the following day's topic.

90. Some learners' records are unsatisfactory. An individual development plan is drawn up for each learner, but these are not used sufficiently to guide learning. Learners are not sufficiently aware of the contents of the plans, and the targets outlined do not have sufficient detail to drive learning effectively. In some cases, they refer only to learners' attendance requirements and the in-house certificates for which they will prepare. Some development plans are incomplete, for instance, one learner's development plan only contains short-term goals for the first week, despite the fact that she has been on programme for four weeks.

91. Each learners' progress is reviewed every four weeks. Review meetings are used to provide good support and encouragement, and generate a short-term action plan. However, these are not sufficiently co-ordinated with the targets in their individual development plans. All learners have an individual learning plan which relates specifically to their literacy and numeracy sessions. These are not linked to, or included in, the individual development plan. Some of these are also insufficiently detailed and some are difficult to read.

92. HYA has made considerable efforts to obtain work placements for learners, but so far, very few are available. There are not enough opportunities for learners to experience short periods of work-sampling and work-tasting. Not all learners are attending training

sessions. During the inspection, the number of learners on the Life Skills programme was 13, although the maximum number attending training sessions was eight and often fewer.

Leadership and management

93. The day-to-day management of the Life Skills programme is the responsibility of the senior learning and development co-ordinator, who is also responsible for managing two recently appointed part-time staff and for quality assuring their teaching sessions. Other staff contribute to the programme when additional support is needed, or when specialisms, such as health and safety, are required. Communications within the team are good. There are formal monthly meetings for Life Skills staff, chaired by the senior learning and development co-ordinator, and attended by the directors. A range of relevant issues, such as the content of the programme, off-site events, and quality assurance audits, is discussed and minutes are produced.

94. Some good partnerships are being developed, for instance with the local college and young peoples' support organisations. The Life Skills programme is still in the development stage, and the elements of the programme are not sufficiently co-ordinated. The documents developed for recording the progress of individual learners is satisfactory, but it is not always completed thoroughly.