

INSPECTION REPORT

West Anglia Training Association

04 December 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
- **learnirect** 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

West Anglia Training Association

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INSPECTION REPORT

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROVIDER

1. West Anglia Training Association (WATA) was formed in 1977 by the amalgamation of two group training associations. It is a registered non-profit making company. The company was based in St Neots in Cambridgeshire before moving to premises in Bedfordshire. In 1995, WATA moved to its current premises in a single-storey training centre on the outskirts of Huntingdon. The premises include training rooms, workshops and offices. A new building that will increase accommodation for training is currently under construction and due for completion early in 2004. The company employs 25 full-time and three part-time staff. The youth training section consists of five full-time staff. Three other full-time staff and one contractor from another section in the company act as assessors and internal verifiers for youth training. WATA is a group training association with over 150 member companies. Youth training accounts for around 14 per cent of turnover. Most of the company's income comes from providing a variety of courses to member companies. WATA specialises in health and safety, technical, engineering skills and management training.

2. The company has a contract with Cambridgeshire Learning and Skills Council to provide advanced modern apprenticeships, foundation modern apprenticeships, and national vocational qualification (NVQ) training in engineering for young people. There are 151 learners, of whom 138 are advanced modern apprentices, and 13 are on the NVQ only training programmes. There are no foundation modern apprentices at present. Forty-four of the member companies, located throughout eastern England, employ the learners. Off-the-job training is subcontracted to 23 further education colleges and one private training provider, all of which have the facilities to train people who have disabilities if required.

3. Cambridge, a short distance to the east of WATA's premises, is a centre for high-technology industry, particularly electronics and information technology. Peterborough, a similar distance to the north, is a centre for manufacturing and distribution. Many of the businesses in the area are very small, with 70 per cent of all those employed working for businesses with fewer than five employees and 29 per cent for small to medium-sized companies with fewer than 200 employees. The unemployment rate of Cambridgeshire for August 2003 was 1.4 per cent, compared with a national figure of 2.5 per cent. Minority ethnic groups currently make up 9.1 per cent of the UK population, compared with 3.6 per cent in Cambridgeshire.

SCOPE OF PROVISION

Engineering, technology & manufacturing

4. WATA provides engineering training for advanced modern apprentices and learners on NVQ training programmes. There are 151 learners, of whom 138 are advanced modern apprentices and 13 are on NVQ programmes. Programmes include electrical

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and electronic servicing, engineering installation and commissioning, engineering maintenance, performing manufacturing operations at level 2, engineering production at levels 2 and 3, technical services at level 3 and engineering manufacture at level 4. All learners are employed by companies in the east of England, ranging from small local firms to large international companies. The companies produce a wide range of products for the automotive, aerospace, agricultural and food processing industries. WATA subcontracts all off-the-job training to 23 further education colleges and one private training provider, with most learners attending colleges in Peterborough, Cambridge and Bedford areas. Learners working towards NVQ, performing engineering operations at level 2, and attend college full-time for periods of up to 36 weeks for background knowledge, practical training and assessment. Learners achieve their level 3 and 4 NVQs in the workplace while attaining academic qualifications on day release at college. Learners also attend college for ordinary and higher national certificates and degrees in engineering. Most assessment for level 3 and 4 qualifications is carried out in the workplace by WATA's assessors. However, some employers have their own qualified assessors.

ABOUT THE INSPECTION

Number of inspectors	6
Number of inspection days	24
Number of learner interviews	42
Number of staff interviews	17
Number of employer interviews	22
Number of subcontractor interviews	10
Number of locations/sites/learning centres visited	31

OVERALL JUDGEMENT

5. The quality of the provision is adequate to meet the reasonable needs of those receiving it. WATA's leadership and management are good, as is its approach to quality assurance. Its approach to equality of opportunity is satisfactory. The quality of work-based learning in engineering 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

Engineering, technology & manufacturing	2
Contributory grades:	
Work-based learning for young people	2

KEY FINDINGS

Achievement and standards

6. Achievement and retention rates are satisfactory. The achievement and retention rates were 60 per cent for 1999-2000 and 2000-01. The retention rate has the potential for an upward trend in the coming years.

7. **There is good achievement of additional qualifications.** Most learners are working for qualifications that are beyond the requirements of the framework and some progress to study for a degree. In addition, there are many industrial courses to enable the learner to increase their skills and competency in a range of specialist engineering tasks.

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
Engineering, technology & manufacturing	0	0	4	1	0	0	0	5
Total	0	0	4	1	0	0	0	5

8. **There is good on- and off-the-job engineering training.** Colleges and employers have good training programmes that are linked to the NVQ evidence requirements. Learners quickly gain practical skills under the guidance of experienced supervisors.

9. **There is good key skills training provided by a well-qualified trainer** who visits learners in the workplace. There is often individual tuition using laptop computers. Most learners have a good understanding of key skills and are enthusiastic about their training. There is good integration and effective use of key skills evidence from the learners' workplace.

10. **There is good support for learners by WATA's staff** who carry out frequent and regular visits to the workplace, and staff are quick to respond to learners' needs. Learners are motivated to complete tasks by the next visit and value the high level of support. Learners also receive good support in the workplace from employers, which provide good training opportunities and are fully supportive of the learning process.

11. Induction is satisfactorily carried out in the workplace, college and at WATA. It includes key aspects of the training programmes such as the learners' rights and responsibilities, health and safety and equal opportunities. Learners have a clear understanding of the NVQ appeals procedure and company grievance procedure.

12. Arrangements to assess learners' literacy and numeracy skills during their initial assessment are adequate. Most learners' support needs are appropriately identified and satisfactory additional support is provided when necessary.

Leadership and management

13. **The management of engineering training is good.** Clear directions and targets are set to ensure that most learners make good progress towards completing their learning programme. Many learners also achieve additional and higher-level qualifications.

14. **The management of the assessment practice is not thorough.** There are some assessor observations but for most learners, the assessment of competence does not begin until the fourth year of their programme. Summative assessment of portfolio evidence takes place at the end of the level 3 NVQ. During assessment visits, the work-based assessors use good questioning techniques to test background knowledge and understanding.

15. **WATA's staff have good opportunities for development and regular appraisals.** Clear targets are set for introducing improvements for learners and these are monitored at regular management meetings.

16. Regular communication between staff, internally, and employers, externally, ensures that the needs of learners are identified and met promptly.

17. **Staff are fully involved in the self-assessment process** and the views of learners and employers are incorporated. The self-assessment report identified all the strengths identified by inspectors, but did not identify the weakness in the assessment practice.

18. Internal verification is satisfactory, but some subcontractors have inadequate internal verification planning and recording.

19. Learners have a basic understanding of equal opportunities, but do not have a wider understanding of the associated issues. There is insufficient promotion of equal opportunities in the workplace. Employers' commitment to equal opportunities is not adequately monitored by WATA.

20. **WATA's head office has good access for people who have restricted mobility.** There is adequate parking and toilets for wheelchairs users.

21. Health and safety is satisfactorily promoted and monitored by WATA. Employers' and subcontractors' premises are regularly checked for compliance.

22. **There are effective and well-established quality assurance procedures.** Policies and procedures are written clearly and reviewed regularly.

23. **There is very good monitoring of the quality of training in colleges.** There are clear

systems for recording and acting on concerns, and learners' complaints are resolved promptly.

The following strengths and weaknesses were identified during this inspection:

Leadership and management

Strengths

- good development and appraisal for staff
- effective and well-established arrangements for quality assurance
- effective self-assessment process and target-setting
- very good monitoring of subcontractors
- effective response to individual learners' needs

Weaknesses

- insufficient promotion of equality of opportunity

Engineering, technology & manufacturing

Strengths

- good achievement of additional qualifications
- good training
- good training and assessment of key skills
- good support for learners

Weaknesses

- insufficiently thorough management of the assessment process

WHAT LEARNERS LIKE ABOUT WEST ANGLIA TRAINING ASSOCIATION:

- the good support from assessors - 'staff coming regularly to the workplace'
- the way staff give encouragement - 'it motivates me'
- the way that WATA sorts out any problems with college courses
- the key skills support
- the setting of targets and their explanation so that learners know what to do
- the college work
- the additional courses available
- achieving certificates

WHAT LEARNERS THINK WEST ANGLIA TRAINING ASSOCIATION COULD IMPROVE:

- change the way units relate to work
- provide more opportunities for practical work
- allow more time at work for portfolio building
- alter the concentration of work late in year 4
- make the language used in NVQ and evidence recording easier to understand
- reduce the time at college - 'fewer evening college sessions'
- make more visits to learners who are some distances away from Huntingdon

KEY CHALLENGES FOR WEST ANGLIA TRAINING ASSOCIATION:

- continue to improve retention and achievement rates
- continue with good training and learner support
- provide more thorough assessments
- improve the quality of recording
- improve employers' involvement
- develop the promotion of equal opportunities

DETAILED INSPECTION FINDINGS

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Grade 2

The following strengths and weaknesses were identified during this inspection:

Strengths

- good development and appraisal for staff
- effective and well-established arrangements for quality assurance
- effective self-assessment process and target-setting
- very good monitoring of subcontractors
- effective response to individual learners' needs

Weaknesses

- insufficient promotion of equality of opportunity

24. WATA has a good staff development and appraisal process. A very wide range of staff development activities are supported and WATA has paid for staff to take some expensive training, including master's degrees. Line managers and members of staff discuss the balance between company and personal development by each activity at annual appraisal meetings. All staff receive appraisals, including the company's own modern apprenticeship administrators. Each appraisal focuses on performance across the past year and establishes clear targets and support needs for the coming year. Every appraisal record is reviewed by WATA's managing director. The development activities are monitored at periodic meetings with line managers throughout the year.

25. Strategic and business planning are satisfactory. WATA sets clear targets for performance for each department and these are monitored at quarterly management meetings. After managers have reported, the managing director makes a report to the board's quarterly meetings. Contract conditions have been met for the provision of modern apprenticeships during the past three years, and a strategic plan for the next three years has been accepted by WATA's funding body.

26. Internal communications are satisfactory. Staff are able to talk privately with managers, including the managing director, and feel included in company decision-making processes. There are monthly minuted meetings at department level and staff also receive the notes from managers' meetings. There is also a good level of informal communication between staff from different departments and between staff and managers.

27. WATA maintains satisfactory communication with external bodies and employers. The association has approximately 200 member companies and organisations and maintains regular contact with these. Employers speak highly of the ease with which they can contact and communicate with WATA's managers.

28. WATA's management information systems are satisfactory. Staff have been thoroughly trained in the use of the computerised recording and monitoring systems. There is satisfactory monitoring of learners' progress, and retention and achievement rates. Monitoring reports have identified areas for action which have resulted in learners' programmes being adjusted or their placements being changed. All review activity is recorded weekly, and a timetable for future review dates is held centrally.

Equality of opportunity

Contributory grade 3

29. WATA provides effective responses to individual learners' needs. For example, training sessions are adapted to meet the needs of learners who have a hearing impairment, through the use of a signer and the transcription of lesson content on to a computer. A member of staff is currently learning sign language and a hearing loop is available in the training rooms. Further examples include arrangements made for a separate room for a learner who required dialysis, and the encouragement of an employer to provide a separate changing and toilet area for a female learner. Saturday workshops have also been provided for learners who are unable to attend weekday training.

30. WATA's head office has good access for people who have a disability. There is adequate parking and toilets for wheelchair users. There are additional training facilities being built and these include disabled access.

31. WATA's equal opportunities policy is satisfactory and includes recent legislation and definitions of equality of opportunity terms. It is reviewed and updated regularly to include new legislation. The managing director of WATA is responsible for implementation of the equal opportunities policy. Learners and staff are given a copy of the policy at induction and employers have a copy at the start of the learners' placement.

32. All learners have a satisfactory understanding of equal opportunities, including their rights and responsibilities. Learners know who to go to if they are being treated unfairly, harassed or bullied. Learners' understanding of equality of opportunity is checked satisfactorily at reviews.

33. An effective system is in place for the management of complaints. WATA uses a corrective action log to record complaints and action is taken promptly to resolve issues for learners.

34. WATA satisfactorily widens participation. At a recent event, nine of the 45 prospective learners were women. Marketing is carried out satisfactorily by participation in recruitment events and exhibitions in local schools and leisure centres. WATA has produced some satisfactory marketing materials that promote a welcome to all learners through the use of positive images. Leaflets aimed at promoting women into engineering are given to female applicants to encourage their participation. Currently, there are five women training in engineering at WATA which represents 3 per cent of the learners.

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Two learners have a disability, which represents 1 per cent of learners, and three learners are from minority ethnic groups, which represents 1.9 per cent of learners.

35. There is insufficient strategy for the promotion of equality of opportunity. WATA has a three-year development plan that includes action on promoting equal opportunities. It includes cultural awareness training for staff, discussion groups on equal opportunities for learners and sharing of the equal opportunities data with employers. However, it is too soon to identify the impact of the proposed actions as they have not yet been fully implemented.

36. Limited formal training on equal opportunities has been provided for staff. There is no specific planned programme of training for staff to improve and update their practice. However, some members of staff have received equal opportunities training and most have received a half-day of training on disability. WATA has recently bought computer software with information on equal opportunities that is available for staff use. Informal discussions take place among the staff, who satisfactorily pass on equality of opportunity information to raise the awareness of learners.

37. There is insufficient promotion or monitoring of equal opportunities in the workplace. Some employers display inappropriate material in the workplace. Employer awareness of equality of opportunity is variable.

38. Satisfactory data on equal opportunities are collected at recruitment, including applications received from different groups, shortlisting and final recruitment. Although equal opportunities data are reviewed each month and analysed, WATA is not making best use of the data. Following analysis, there is no specific action plan with measurable outcomes to widen participation by under-represented groups.

Quality assurance

Contributory grade 2

39. There are effective and well-established quality assurance arrangements at WATA. Policies and procedures are written in clear and accessible language, and cover all aspects of training. All documents are version numbered and dated, and the master copies are held in well-organised files. Clear links are made between the various aspects of training, so that quality assurance is an inclusive and holistic process. Improvements in training have been made as a result of quality assurance activity. Comprehensive internal review mechanisms assess and enhance the effectiveness of all processes at clearly timetabled intervals. There is good knowledge of the quality assurance arrangements among staff who are committed to their maintenance.

40. There is very good monitoring of subcontractors. The company employs a consultant to monitor the quality of provision in the 23 colleges and one private training provider. In 2003, every college was visited and teaching was observed in all but one. A very comprehensive report was produced, evaluating the teaching, accommodation, resources, timetabling and staff qualifications at each institution. Learners were interviewed at each college and their views on training were included in the report. Managers reviewed the report and further improvements in the monitoring activity have

been made for the current year. There are clear systems for recording and acting upon concerns about off-the-job training. The handling and resolution of each incident or issue is allocated to a named individual, with investigative and corrective actions logged and dated. On several occasions, swift action has been taken to deal with learner complaints or observed weaknesses in subcontracted provision. Learners expressed satisfaction with, and confidence in, their college courses.

41. WATA has an effective self-assessment process that is linked to target-setting for staff. Annual self-assessment has been a feature of WATA's quality assurance processes for many years. The company carries out a comprehensive review of its training activities and produces a detailed development plan to initiate quality improvements. Most development targets throughout the past three years have been met and many identified weaknesses have been resolved. All staff are involved in the self-assessment process, and the views of learners and employers are taken into account. However, the current self-assessment report is insufficiently judgmental, detailed and critical. The report identified most of the strengths found by inspectors, but several weaknesses were not identified. Targets for improvement are set for departments and individual members of staff as part of the self-assessment process. Targets are reviewed periodically during the year and at appraisal.

42. Internal verification is satisfactory. The four verifiers are suitably qualified and work to required standards. There is a verification strategy and a sampling schedule is produced annually. Sampling during the past three years has been in excess of 70 per cent of learners each year. Learners are assessed late in their programmes and opportunities for observation of assessment have been overlooked, but verifiers had not identified this weakness in assessment practice.

43. There are satisfactory mechanisms for collecting of learner and employer feedback. Separate questionnaires are used to record the views of early leavers, learners on-programme, and those who have just completed their training. Data are analysed and reports are reviewed by the training manager and managing director. Actions to improve training have resulted from learner feedback. However, learners do not receive any formal response to their views and comments, and some question the usefulness of feedback. Formal employer feedback is gathered annually by means of questionnaires. There is also regular informal monitoring of employer satisfaction levels by managers and other staff.

44. Health and safety is satisfactorily promoted and monitored by WATA. Employers' and subcontractors' premises are subject to an initial audit, consisting of checks on health and safety, equality of opportunity and other elements. Health and safety forms part of the checklist of review activities between WATA's staff and learners.

AREAS OF LEARNING

Engineering, technology & manufacturing

Grade 2

Programmes inspected	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Work-based learning for young people	151	2

The following strengths and weaknesses were identified during this inspection:

Strengths

- good achievement of additional qualifications
- good training
- good training and assessment of key skills
- good support for learners

Weaknesses

- insufficiently thorough management of the assessment process

Achievement and standards

45. Achievement and retention rates are satisfactory. During the period 1996-1997 to 1998-99, the achievement rate averaged 70 per cent, but in the period 1999-2000 to 2000-01 it reduced to 60 per cent. The retention rate also reduced in the years 1999-2000 to 2000-01 to 60 per cent, but it has the potential to increase in the coming years. Most learners are working for qualifications which are beyond the requirements of the framework. Some then progress to study for a degree. In addition, there are many specialist industrial courses, such as working in confined spaces, wiring regulations, lift truck driving, slinging, and abrasive wheels. Some courses result in learners achieving competent operator status from professional and awarding bodies.

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)																
	2003-04		2002-03		2001-02		2000-01		1999-2000		1998-99		1997-98		1996-97	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number of starts	55		35		43		43		30		23		12		9	
Retained*	0		0		4		3		16	53	19	83	10	83	6	67
Successfully completed	0		0		3		2		7	23	16	70	8	67	6	67
Still in learning	52		28		30		25		3	10	0	0	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																
	2003-04		2002-03		2001-02		2000-01		1999-2000		1998-99		1997-98		1996-97	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number of starts	2		10		3		22		2		1		1		9	
Retained*	0		0		0		14		1	50	1	100	1	100	7	78
Successfully completed	0		0		0		9		0	0	1	100	1	100	7	78
Still in learning	2		9		1		1		0	0	0	0	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

Quality of education and training

46. The training in engineering is good. Many employers have well-structured training programmes that cover the four-year advanced modern apprenticeship. The training programmes have clear learning objectives for each of the departments in which the learner will work and are linked to the NVQ evidence requirements. There is good training in the workplace for learners to develop their practical skills. Employers provide learners with good opportunities to develop their skills on a wide range of good tools, equipment and machinery. Most workplaces have a high regard for health and safety and this is well managed. However, in some workplaces there is insufficient monitoring and safety hazards were observed. For example, some machines were not fitted with safety guards and workshop passageways were unsafe. Workplace supervisors are very experienced and pass on their considerable knowledge and skills to learners. Learners are quick to learn and quickly develop their practical skills, enabling them to work systematically on complex tasks with little supervision. Learners enjoy their training and soon produce good work to industry standards. Encouraged by employers, learners develop confidence in using tools and equipment and acquire the ability to be critical about their completed work. Off-the-job training is well planned. Individual lessons are well structured and background knowledge and good practical training sessions are

effectively linked to the NVQ. Resources for off-the-job training are satisfactory.

47. There is good training and assessment for key skills, which are an integral part of the NVQ. Key skills were identified as a strength in the self-assessment report. The key skills trainer is well qualified and has a comprehensive understanding of the performance objectives and evidence requirements, having achieved all of the key skills qualifications at level 3. Most workplace supervisors are involved during the learners' key skills reviews. They are encouraged to recognise appropriate opportunities from the learners' activities in the workplace to collect evidence towards their key skills and NVQ. Training officers frequently visit learners in the workplace for individual training. One learner was given intensive training in setting up a database using a laptop computer. Most learners have a good understanding of key skills. They are enthusiastic about their key skills training and are motivated by the visits.

48. There is good support for learners, a strength that was partially identified in the self-assessment report. WATA's staff carry out frequent and regular visits to the workplace. Training officers visit every six to eight weeks to carry out assessment activities for the level 3 NVQ, review progress and to enable learners to gather work-based evidence towards their key skills. A reviewing officer visits at least every 12 weeks to carry out a pastoral review to support the assessor's visit. WATA's staff are quick to respond to learners' needs when identified. For example, when a learner was made redundant, WATA's staff quickly found them new employment. In addition, a learner who was beyond the contracted funding period, and pursuing a degree course, still received visits from staff. Learners value this level of support and know they can make contact with staff at any time, even out of working hours. They are given telephone numbers, mobile telephone numbers and e-mail addresses of WATA's staff.

49. Learners also receive good support in the workplace. Employers provide good training opportunities and are fully supportive of the learning process. All employers fully support and encourage learners to attend off-the-job training. Learners are placed with skilled members of staff and some companies have formal mentoring systems to give an independent source of support. Some employers provide suitable resources for learners who have a physical disability. For example, an employer encouraged a learner to carry out a risk assessment of their work area and this led to the employer providing suitable resources for the learner to work more effectively. In some instances where learners have found difficulty in providing the necessary range of evidence for their NVQs, employers have arranged for them to gain experience in other parts of the company or with subcontractors. Some employers are not directly involved in progress reviews, although all employers are kept informed of the results. The recording document used for reviews does not allow employers to make a written contribution.

50. The learners' induction is satisfactory. Most learners have three inductions, one in the workplace, one at college and one at WATA. Induction includes key aspects of the training programmes such as the learners' rights and responsibilities, health and safety and equal opportunities. Learners have a clear understanding of the NVQ appeals procedure and company grievance procedure.

Leadership and management

51. The management of engineering is good. Managers set clear directions and targets to ensure that learners make good progress towards completing their framework. For many learners this includes the achievement of additional and higher-level qualifications. The self-assessment report identified all the strengths identified by inspectors, but did not identify the weakness in the assessment practice. Some subcontractors have inadequate internal verification planning and recording. For example, the sampling of portfolios and assessor observations are not adequately planned throughout the training programme. When the internal verifier observes the assessment process, it is not always recorded.

52. Learners have a basic understanding of equal opportunities, but do not have a wider understanding of the associated issues. There is insufficient promotion of equal opportunities in the workplace. Employers' commitment to equal opportunities is inadequately monitored by WATA. In many companies inappropriate material is displayed.

53. The management of assessment practice is insufficiently thorough. This weakness was not identified in the self-assessment report. Learners do not receive enough assessment in the workplace in year two and three, and they have little knowledge of work-based assessment or that they will be assessed on the job. For most learners, the assessment of competence does not begin until the fourth year of their learning programme. Summative assessment of portfolio evidence takes place at the end of the level 3 NVQ. There is little progressive assessment, other than the assessment of background knowledge. During assessment visits to the workplace, assessors use good questioning techniques to test background knowledge and check the learners' understanding of theories and principles. Some assessor observation reports are detailed and give clear reference to performance objectives. Learners begin recording their work-based experience in detailed training log books during year two. This is verified satisfactorily by their supervisor or manager for validity and accuracy. However, some of these reports are not endorsed by managers. In some portfolios where assessors have accepted evidence and signed and endorsed the submission, there is no portfolio reference to the location of this evidence. Some learners cannot locate the evidence and others have difficulty tracing it. Some portfolios of evidence do not have a witness status list that is a requirement of awarding bodies.