

# REINSPECTION REPORT

## YMCA Training Reinspection

05 February 2004



ADULT LEARNING  
INSPECTORATE

## YMCA TRAINING REINSPECTION

### Grading

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

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

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

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

The two grading scales relate to each other as follows:

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

## Adult Learning Inspectorate

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

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

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

# REINSPECTION REPORT

## YMCA Training Reinspection

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## REINSPECTION REPORT

### DESCRIPTION OF THE PROVIDER

1. YMCA Training was founded in 1978, in the north of England, in response to the growing number of young people who were unable to find employment during the recession. It was a department of the National Council of YMCAs in England up until July 2002, when the business was transferred into a new corporate and governance structure. YMCA Training was established as an independent charity and company limited by guarantee, and as a YMCA affiliated to the National Council. YMCA Training is committed to helping individuals achieve their potential and play a full part in society by providing good training opportunities. It is one of the largest voluntary sector training organisations in the country and employs approximately 500 full-time and part-time staff.

2. The board of trustees meets every two months and has contributed to decisions about governance, finance and strategy for the new organisation. The board is made up of representatives from YMCA, as well as the financial and learning and skills sector. Three task groups support the work of the board of trustees and focus on strategy, finance and human resources. The chief executive reports directly to the board. Four directors oversee specific aspects of the organisation's work and are responsible for a number of training centres. Three further directors have responsibility for quality assurance, finance and human resources. The directors report directly to the chief executive. There are 25 managers who oversee the work of YMCA Training from its 22 training centres across the country. Five additional managers oversee the organisation's work from a national perspective. The organisation has two quality assurance managers, one based in the north and one in the south of England.

3. YMCA Training has a strategic plan which includes goals for the next three years. The organisation has a policy and procedures for the promotion of equality and diversity which include responsibilities for staff and learners in dealing with harassment, victimisation and discrimination. The organisation has a quality assurance policy and quality assurance manual. Both quality assurance managers are responsible for the development and implementation of quality assurance across the organisation. Each training centre has a copy of the quality assurance procedures as well as a range of local variations. YMCA Training is in its sixth year of self-assessment.

4. YMCA Training contracts with the national Learning and Skills Council (LSC) and works with 15 local LSCs and 12 Jobcentre Plus districts. The contract with the national LSC covers all work-based learning programmes for young people including advanced modern apprenticeships, foundation modern apprenticeships, national vocational qualification (NVO) training and Entry to Employment (E2E). The contracts with Jobcentre Plus include New Deal 18-24, New Deal 25+ and work-based learning for adults and programme centres. YMCA Training also has funding for additional pilot schemes and projects from several local LSCs and from other funding sources. The sources of funding include neighbourhood support funds, directly from schools, private funding and the European Social Fund (ESF). All these projects have links with, and supplement, the

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government-funded training programmes.

### SCOPE OF PROVISION

#### Construction

5. Construction is offered at three training centres and there are 27 learners. Five are working towards an NVQ at level 1 in wood occupations and nine are on E2E programmes and are working towards the foundation construction award in wood occupations or decorative occupations. A further 13 learners on E2E are training in construction as part of their programme. YMCA Training offers additional qualifications to all learners. All learners on E2E are working towards a certificate in preparation for employment. One training centre has recently gained approval to offer the building craft occupations foundation award. Recruitment is by referral from Connexions or through recommendation. Successful applicants take an initial assessment. All current learners have additional learning and/or social support needs. One learner is attending a work placement and most carry out external project work. In two of the training centres, a subcontractor delivers the off-the-job training and assessment. Subcontractors carry out internal verification for the NVQ and foundation construction award programmes. YMCA Training's staff and the subcontractors' staff are occupationally qualified and have suitable industrial experience. Formal progress reviews are carried out every four weeks.

### ABOUT THE REINSPECTION

|  |    |
|--|----|
| Number of inspectors                               | 3  |
| Number of inspection days                          | 9  |
| Number of learner interviews                       | 10 |
| Number of staff interviews                         | 14 |
| Number of subcontractor interviews                 | 2  |
| Number of locations/sites/learning centres visited | 3  |
| Number of partner/external agency interviews       | 1  |

### OVERALL JUDGEMENT

6. YMCA Training's previous inspection was carried out in December 2002. The quality of provision in land-based, engineering and manufacturing, business administration, information and communications technology (ICT), retailing, customer service and distribution, hairdressing and care, was judged to be satisfactory. Provision in hospitality, visual arts and foundation programmes was judged to be good. Leadership and management were satisfactory, equal opportunities was good and quality assurance was unsatisfactory. Construction was judged to be unsatisfactory. At the end of the reinspection process, the quality of provision in construction was found to be satisfactory.

## GRADES

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

|                                      | Inspection | Reinspection |
|--------------------------------------|------------|--------------|
| <b>Construction</b>                  | <b>4</b>   | <b>3</b>     |
| Contributory grades:                 |            |              |
| Work-based learning for young people | 4          | 3            |

## AREAS OF LEARNING

### Construction

Grade 3

| Programmes inspected                 | Number of learners | Contributory grade |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Work-based learning for young people | 27                 | 3                  |

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

#### Strengths

- good standard of work by most learners
- good understanding of qualification requirements by learners
- good use of practical projects to support learning
- well-structured portfolios of evidence

#### Weaknesses

- poor retention and achievement rates on NVQ programmes and the foundation construction award
- insufficient site-based work experience
- some weak provision of literacy and numeracy support for learners

#### Achievement and standards

7. The standard of work being produced by most learners is good. In most instances, practical work is above the standard required by the qualification. Intricate and detailed work is carried out well and to a good finish. This is particularly evident in decorative occupations where radiators and metalwork are gloss painted to a very good standard. Learners have very good working relationships with their trainers and are keen to receive constructive feedback and acknowledgement of their achievements. Learners are motivated and take great pride in the standard of their work. In 2003, four learners received a certificate from the local authority for their work on a community project.

8. The retention and achievement rates are poor on NVQ programmes and the foundation construction award. Learners who started between August 2000 and December 2002 were registered for NVQ programmes and those who started after January 2003 were registered on the foundation construction award. During 2000-03, the retention and achievement rates were 37 per cent and 33 per cent respectively. Three of the learners are still in learning and the retention and achievement rates have the potential to increase to 39 per cent and 36 per cent respectively. On average, over 80 per cent of learners on construction programmes start with no formal qualifications and many have significant personal and social problems. Of the learners who left early between 2000 and 2003, 45 per cent entered employment or further training. All



learners are now on the E2E programme for which there is no requirement to achieve a vocational qualification.

9. The retention rate for learners who are working towards the foundation construction award is 60 per cent, which includes two early leavers who have entered employment. Most learners are making satisfactory progress towards achieving their training objectives.

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

10. There is a good understanding of qualification requirements by learners. Most learners can identify units of competence which make up the NVQ or foundation construction award. Most learners are fully aware of what they have achieved to date and how they are progressing towards the completion of remaining units. Most learners are aware of their right to fair assessment and what to do in the event of unfair treatment. All learners are actively involved in the process of portfolio-building and can identify the assessment documents currently in use. Most learners have a good understanding of the different strands of the E2E programme and use this information to help them match their individual needs to the options available.

11. There is good use of practical projects to support learning. Learners in decorative occupations are currently working on a refurbishment project at a local scout camp. The project includes a wide range of work activities and is developing the learners' communication and team working skills. Some learners in wood occupations are working on an ongoing project at a local boat yard. Learners have carried out extensive alteration and refurbishment work, including re-lining of walls, the replacement of floor joists and decking and installation of new stud partition walls. The range of work activities exceeds the requirements of the qualification. Other project work includes the refurbishment of a local subway. Some individual project work effectively develops a combination of construction, numeracy, research, ICT and communication skills.

12. The presentation of portfolios is good. The structure of the portfolios enables evidence to be easily cross-referenced to individual units of the qualification. Learners' progress towards achievement of their target qualification is recorded clearly. Learners' work is neat and is maintained in a logical order. There is a wide range of evidence including photographs, assignments, written questions, learners' and assessors' statements and practical tasks. There are dedicated individual sessions with learners and trainers in order to concentrate on portfolio-building. Learners are proud of the work in their portfolios.

13. The standard of teaching is generally satisfactory. Trainers have up-to-date technical knowledge and use a variety of methods to stimulate learners. In one training session, learners were shown how to use power tools to prepare materials for use. Learners were able to repeat the process satisfactorily without prompting from the trainer. Learners were also able to demonstrate their understanding of the health and safety issues surrounding the use of these tools, through discussion and practical demonstration. Resources and facilities are satisfactory for the qualifications being offered. Although

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most of the training workshops are small, they are adequate for the number of learners. Materials and equipment are sufficient to meet the needs of the learners. A number of learning and activity packs have been developed by trainers to help learners with the development of their background knowledge and preparing them for external tests.

14. Initial assessment involves referral information from Connexions, and interview and diagnostic testing of literacy and numeracy skills. Learners are placed on appropriate programmes and information from initial assessment is used to plan their training. Assessment is fair and accurate and is carried out regularly. Assessment and verification procedures follow regulatory body requirements. The arrangements for progress reviews are satisfactory. Learners on E2E programmes can take part in a satisfactory range of enrichment activities including fitness training, drama, craft and music. There are several outside activities that offer team games and initiative challenges in orienteering and camping. One centre provides vocational opportunities for learners which are tailored to their particular interests. They make good use of links with outside agencies. One learner used his photography skills to contribute to an exhibition, and another learner who was linked to a young writers' society has written a play that has been performed by schoolchildren at a local theatre. Another centre has regular external trips to historic sites and museums arranged by the E2E tutor.

15. At the previous inspection, there was no site-based work experience for learners. This is less-directly relevant to the E2E programme, but still has a negative impact on the development of key employability skills. There has been some improvement, with one learner now on a site placement and increased amounts of project work. YMCA Training has recruited a full-time member of staff as a work-placement adviser. The placement adviser makes contact with local employers to seek opportunities for work experience and is promoting the services offered by YMCA Training to local community groups. Existing training advisers have become increasingly involved in jobsearch activities. However, there is still insufficient real work experience for the learners. The project work does not adequately replicate the pressures and constraints of a real work environment as all projects are carried out under the guidance and supervision of the trainers and assessors. Learners are missing out on the opportunity to further develop their employability skills in terms of working to deadlines and meeting employers' needs.

16. There is some weak provision of literacy and numeracy support for learners. Support is matched to the core curriculum and there is appropriate emphasis on individual support. Learners' progress is reported each month and this information is used in the progress review process. At two of the training centres, the provision of literacy and numeracy support is satisfactory, but at the third centre aspects of the support are ineffective. Information from progress reviews on the E2E programme is not used effectively to plan literacy and numeracy support. Some staff have insufficient awareness of the E2E programme and of the level of support needed by learners. Some of the planning and recording of progression is weak. Learners receive appropriate information, advice and guidance on programmes and career progression. Induction arrangements are satisfactory and learners have access to effective support on personal issues.

## Leadership and management

17. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Improvements have been made to the construction provision since the previous inspection and significant improvements have been made to the management of health and safety. New strategies for dealing with attendance and punctuality problems have now been introduced, including certificates and financial rewards for outstanding attendance and punctuality, and providing breakfast for learners on three days each week. Sanctions for poor attendance and punctuality include a reduction in the learners' training allowance and possible dismissal from the programme. Although there are still some problems, attendance and punctuality have improved since the previous inspection. Communication between the training centres and the subcontractors is effective. Staff have received appropriate training to make them aware of the requirements of the E2E programmes.

18. There are satisfactory arrangements for the promotion and monitoring of equal opportunities. All three training centres have satisfactory access for learners who have restricted mobility. The monitoring of subcontracted provision is effective. The self-assessment process was appropriately inclusive of the views of staff and learners. Inspectors identified with many of the strengths and weaknesses which were identified in the self-assessment report. There has been some good progress in the management of subcontracted internal verification since the previous inspection. Verification visits are now formally planned and take place every month. YMCA Training has introduced standard verification documents and these are being used effectively. Sampling is satisfactory. There has been an increase in internal verification and assessor meetings and appropriate records are maintained. All internal verification is subject to monitoring by the centre managers and quality assurance managers.