

REINSPECTION REPORT

Pelcombe Training Limited Reinspection

23 April 2004



ADULT LEARNING
INSPECTORATE

Grading

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

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

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

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

The two grading scales relate to each other as follows:

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

Adult Learning Inspectorate

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

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

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

REINSPECTION REPORT

Pelcombe Training Limited Reinspection

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REINSPECTION REPORT

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROVIDER

1. Pelcombe Training Ltd (Pelcombe Training) was established as a privately owned limited company in 1995. The company's headquarters are in Colchester and it has 29 other learning centres across the east of England, London, the Northeast, the West Midlands and Yorkshire. Pelcombe Training has contracts with Essex, Suffolk and Norfolk local Learning and Skills Councils (LSC) as well as Jobcentre Plus. It provides work-based learning programmes for young people in engineering and manufacturing, business administration, retailing and customer service, and care programmes. In addition it also provides training in business administration, information and communications technology (ICT) and care through the employer training pilot programme funded through Essex LSC. The organisation no longer provides work-based learning for young people in hospitality or hairdressing. Jobcentre Plus programmes include New Deal programmes, work-based learning for adults and programme centres. The aim of these programmes is to provide training and jobs in land-based provision, construction, engineering and manufacturing, business administration, ICT, retailing, customer service and transportation, health and social care and foundation programmes.

2. The senior management team consists of the managing director supported by three other directors and a corporate development executive. The company is split into three operational regions with each managed by a regional manager who is supported by the contract managers at most sites. There are a total of 173 staff currently employed with Pelcombe Training.

SCOPE OF PROVISION

Land-based provision

3. Land-based provision is currently provided through the New Deal environment task force option. This provides work experience and training towards vocational qualifications with jobsearch guidance and support, taught full time over a 26-week period. There are 14 clients currently enrolled at the Dewsbury, Huddersfield and Wisbech learning centres on New Deal 18-24. There are also two clients on New Deal 25+ and work-based learning for adults. The clients at Dewsbury and Huddersfield are based on a project with the Earlsheaton churchyard restoration project and those at Wisbech are based on a project at the Healthy Living Centre in King's Lynn and also use the Sandringham Estate. There were not enough learners at the previous inspection for this area of learning to be inspected.

Construction

4. There are 50 clients on construction programmes, provided in nine of the provider's learning centres. Of these, 24 New Deal 18-24 clients are on voluntary sector and environment task force options and the full-time education and training options, and 26 clients are on the New Deal 25+ and work-based learning for adults, on longer occupational training (LOT) programmes, intensive activity programmes (IAP) and short job-focused training (SJFT) programmes. Clients work towards a range of qualifications including assessment for health and safety and a certificate in construction skills and specialist plant. All clients receive an initial induction and complete an individual learning plan. They receive all of their practical training and work experience through projects in the community or at subcontracted training providers. Clients carry out jobsearch for one day each week at one of the learning centres. There were not enough learners at the previous inspection for this area to be inspected.

Engineering, technology & manufacturing

5. Pelcombe Training provides learning programmes in mechanical, maintenance, electrical and electronic servicing and vehicle engineering. There are a total of 11 clients on the environment task force and voluntary sector options of New Deal 18-24, recruited from the Birmingham area. There are six foundation modern apprentices and 18 advanced modern apprentices, all recruited from the Colchester area. There is also one learner on a national vocational qualification (NVQ) programme. These learners are working towards NVQs in performing engineering and manufacturing operations, technical services, vehicle engineering, engineering production, manufacture and engineering maintenance. In addition there are seven clients on adult programmes. There were not enough learners for this area to be graded separately.

6. The New Deal option provides work and training for up to six months with clients working towards units of an NVQ at level 1. Most of the clients on the New Deal 18-24 programme are placed with an employer for three days a week with one day at Pelcombe Training for jobsearch and another for background knowledge work. For the work-based learning programmes, learners are recruited directly from employers. Assessments take place in the workplace. Most learners attend one of three local colleges on a day-release basis to obtain their technical certificate. Pelcombe Training advisers monitor learners' progress.

Business administration, management & professional

7. There are 177 learners on business administration programmes. Of these, 35 are on work-based learning programmes for young people, of whom eight are foundation modern apprentices and 26 are advanced modern apprentices, with one learner working towards an NVQ at level 2. There are 113 clients on New Deal and work-based learning for adults programmes, of whom 49 are on New Deal 25+ and 64 are on New Deal 18-24. New Deal 18-24 clients are on the voluntary sector and full-time education and training options. New Deal 25+ clients are on LOT, IAP and SJFT programmes. Clients on Jobcentre Plus programmes work towards units of an administration NVQ at level 2. NVQs are provided either by Pelcombe Training or through three subcontractors at two learning centres. Work placements form the central part of the provision. There are 29 learners following training on the employer training pilot. Training for young people is provided at 10 sites and for adults at six sites.

Information & communications technology

8. Pelcombe provides ICT programmes through New Deal 18-24, New Deal 25+ and work-based learning for adults programmes and the employer training pilot. All programmes lead to an exam-based computer literacy qualification. There are currently 17 clients on New Deal 25+ SJFT and LOT, 36 clients on New Deal 18-24 environment task force and voluntary sector options and 24 learners on the employer training pilot. Training takes place at six sites in East Anglia and the Midlands. Pelcombe Training uses four subcontractors to provide some of the training to clients on New Deal 18-24. New Deal 25+ clients attend the learning centre full time for either six, 13 or 26 weeks. New Deal 18-24 clients attend full time for 52 weeks. All New Deal programmes include one day a week of jobsearch training. Learners on the employer training pilot attend for one half-day a week for 43 weeks. This area of learning was not inspected separately at the previous inspection, but as part of the business administration programmes.

Retailing, customer service & transportation

9. There are currently 257 clients on Jobcentre Plus programmes and 36 learners on work-based learning programmes. Eight learners are advanced modern apprentices, 23 are foundation modern apprentices and five are working towards NVQs at level 2. New Deal 18-24 clients are on full-time education and training, environment task force and voluntary sector options. There are 195 clients on New Deal 25+ and work-based learning for adults programmes following SJFT, IAP and LOT programmes. Most of the courses are in lift truck training and large goods vehicle (LGV) driving training with some other relevant driving courses. The programmes last from two to 26 weeks. Clients receive an induction at the provider's learning centres, followed by jobsearch and occupational training. Employment is the key objective of the provision. There are additional courses in information technology (IT) and vocational added value courses, such as lorry mounted crane training and health and safety training. Training for the technical certificate element of the apprenticeship programme is carried out in the learning centres. Some assessment and verification is subcontracted to another provider.

Health, social care & public services

10. There are 107 learners on health and social care programmes. Of these, 12 are foundation modern apprentices working towards NVQs at level 2, a technical certificate at level 1 and appropriate key skills. Nine are advanced modern apprentices and five learners are on NVQ-only programmes. Training for the NVQ is mainly provided on the job. Training for key skills and the technical certificate takes place on an individual basis once a week at one of the learning centres.

11. There are nine clients on the 26-week New Deal 18-24 voluntary sector option, which is based in Birmingham. Clients are referred by Jobcentre Plus having already completed an assessment of their literacy, numeracy and language skills and, for some, a period of training in Gateway. Clients attend an induction at the provider and a informal interview with the work-placement provider. Clients are placed in early years settings such as community nurseries and playgroups. Most clients are completing basic computer literacy courses. Some clients are taking three units of an NVQ at level 2 in early years care and education. The training, assessment and verification in early years is subcontracted to a local training provider. The provider's work-placement officer visits clients each week to review their progress and to liaise with the work-placement provider. Clients attend the provider's learning centre on a weekly basis for jobsearch training. Clients taking IT awards attend the learning centre on a weekly basis for off-the-job training.

12. There are 72 learners on the employer training pilot programme. This programme aims to enable experienced, employed adult learners to gain an NVQ at level 2. All learners are employed in residential care and nursing homes, supported housing schemes for people with learning disabilities and domiciliary care settings. Learners are visited every three to six weeks by their assessor who plans and carries out assessments and sets activities for learners to complete in between visits. Learners do not attend off-the-job training. Learners are recruited through their employers and interviewed by Pelcombe Training staff, with a record kept of responses. Fourteen of these learners have access to a work-based assessor employed by their own companies. All learners are involved in the provider's assessment and internal verification processes.

Foundation programmes

13. There are 574 clients on foundation programmes. Of these, 120 are on New Deal 18-24, 250 are on New Deal 25+ and work-based learning for adults programmes and 204 are on programme centres. Clients are referred by Jobcentre Plus and receive an induction programme that includes an initial assessment. Following this assessment, they are referred to a range of programmes. Clients on basic employability training (BET) programmes attend literacy, numeracy and language classes for five days a week. When ready, they can attend a work placement and jobsearch activities. These clients attend for 30 hours each week. BET clients work towards achieving a qualification at entry level 3 and the new national tests for literacy and numeracy at level 1. Programme centre clients and clients on Gateway normally attend one day a week for jobsearch. Gateway to Work clients attend a two-week mandatory programme at a number of learning centres across the country.

ABOUT THE REINSPECTION

Number of inspectors	21
Number of inspection days	103
Number of learner interviews	276
Number of staff interviews	147
Number of employer interviews	52
Number of subcontractor interviews	15
Number of locations/sites/learning centres visited	79
Number of partner/external agency interviews	1

OVERALL JUDGEMENT

14. At the previous inspection, training for learners in engineering and manufacturing, retailing and transport, hairdressing and foundation programmes was satisfactory, as was equality of opportunity. Training for learners in business administration and health and social care was unsatisfactory as were Pelcombe's leadership and management and quality assurance. Training for hospitality learners was very weak. At the end of the reinspection process training for learners in engineering and manufacturing, retailing, customer service and transportation, health and social care are judged to be satisfactory, as is equality of opportunity. Land-based provision, construction, business administration, ICT and foundation programmes are unsatisfactory, as is Pelcombe's leadership and management and quality assurance. Pelcombe Training has been referred to Jobcentre Plus and the Learning and Skills Council for emergency action.

GRADES

Grades awarded at previous inspection

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

Leadership and management	4
Contributory grades:	
Equality of opportunity	3
Quality assurance	4

Engineering, technology & manufacturing	3
Contributory grades:	
Work-based learning for young people	3

Business administration, management & professional	4
Contributory grades:	
New Deal 25+ and work-based learning for adults	4
Work-based learning for young people	4

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Retailing, customer service & transportation	3
Contributory grades:	
New Deal 25+ and work-based learning for adults	3
Work-based learning for young people	4

Hospitality, sport, leisure & travel	5
Contributory grades:	
Work-based learning for young people	5

Hairdressing & beauty therapy	3
Contributory grades:	
Work-based learning for young people	3

Health, social care & public services	4
Contributory grades:	
Work-based learning for young people	4

Foundation programmes	3
Contributory grades:	
New Deal 25+ and work-based learning for adults	3
Programme centres	3
New Deal 18-24	2
Work-based learning for young people	4

Grades awarded at reinspection

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

Leadership and management	4
Contributory grades:	
Equality of opportunity	3
Quality assurance	4

Land-based provision	4
Contributory grades:	
New Deal 18-24	4
New Deal 25+ and work-based learning for adults	4

Construction	4
Contributory grades:	
New Deal 25+ and work-based learning for adults	4
New Deal 18-24	4

Engineering, technology & manufacturing	3
Contributory grades:	
Work-based learning for young people	2
New Deal 18-24	3
New Deal 25+ and work-based learning for adults	3

Business administration, management & professional	4
Contributory grades:	
New Deal 18-24	3
New Deal 25+ and work-based learning for adults	4
Work-based learning for young people	4
Other government-funded provision	3

Information & communications technology	4
Contributory grades:	
New Deal 18-24	4
Other government-funded provision	4
New Deal 25+ and work-based learning for adults	4

Retailing, customer service & transportation	3
Contributory grades:	
New Deal 25+ and work-based learning for adults	3
New Deal 18-24	3
Work-based learning for young people	4

Health, social care & public services	3
Contributory grades:	
Other government-funded provision	3
Work-based learning for young people	3
New Deal 18-24	3

Foundation programmes	4
Contributory grades:	
New Deal 25+ and work-based learning for adults	4
Programme centres	3
New Deal 18-24	4

KEY FINDINGS

Achievement and standards

15. **Retention of clients on adults programmes is good for construction and retailing, customer service and transportation.** Clients' skills are developed effectively on construction programmes. Adult clients develop good craft skills, and clients on New Deal 18-24 demonstrate a satisfactory standard of work and good self-confidence.

16. **Development of clients' IT skills is very good on business administration and ICT programmes.** Many clients have little or no previous ICT skills or knowledge and develop well during the courses. **Development of learners' skills in the workplace is good for learners on engineering programmes.** Learners work with skilled practitioners to develop their practical skills and learners make significant gains in self-confidence.

17. **The standard of work in the portfolios of care learners on employer training pilot programmes is good.** They are clearly organised and well presented. Learners make good use of reflective accounts to relate learning to practice.

18. **Job outcomes are low for clients on New Deal 18-24 land-based provision, engineering and ICT programmes.** Job outcomes are also low for adults on engineering, business administration, and ICT programmes and for clients on New Deal 18-24 and New Deal 25+ programmes.

19. **Pass rates in achievement of LGV licences at some learning centres are poor for clients on transportation.** Achievement rates on all work-based programmes for young people on retailing, customer service and transportation are low.

20. **Progress of some care learners towards their qualifications is slow.** On the employer training pilot, some learners had not had enough assessor visits at the start of their programme. Of those on the modern apprenticeship programme who started before 2004, most have made slow progress towards their key skills qualification and technical certificate.

21. **Recording of client progress and achievement is unsatisfactory for construction clients.** Although clients have completed a range of practical projects, they are not able to record this work to show potential employers. Learning plans are not consistently updated. Many progress reviews are completed with only general statements relating to clients' work or do not refer to vocational training.

Quality of education and training

Grades awarded to learning sessions

	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Total
Land-based provision	0	0	2	1	0	0	0	3
Construction	0	0	2	0	0	1	0	3
Engineering, technology & manufacturing	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
Business administration, management & professional	0	2	1	0	5	0	0	8
Information & communications technology	0	2	0	0	0	1	0	3
Retailing, customer service & transportation	0	0	5	1	0	0	0	6
Foundation programmes	0	0	3	10	6	0	0	19
Total	0	4	13	13	11	2	0	43

22. Practical and jobsearch training is good for clients on land-based provision programmes. Individual training is good for IT learners and tutors fully understand the needs of individual learners and give good, clear explanations. Training in transport and lift truck is good and tutors provide good support. Clients are taught useful techniques to help pass their driving tests. On-the-job training is good for learners on care programmes and effective coaching and guidance are provided by workplace supervisors and managers.

23. Induction and jobsearch materials are well presented for foundation clients. There is a comprehensive and standardised jobsearch pack for tutors and clients. The materials are clear and good use is made of illustrations.

24. Assessment is good on the engineering work-based learning programmes. Regular progress visits are carried out in the workplace and there is good use of workplace evidence. Assessment practice is good in business administration. Clear targets are set and are understood by learners.

25. Initial assessment is good for learners on care programmes. Comprehensive information on social barriers, additional learning needs and other indicators are used to place the learner with an appropriate employer. Initial assessment is used effectively to plan the programme for each learner.

26. Good use is made of projects that benefit the local community on land-based programmes. For example, there is an effective link between the learning centres and a churchyard restoration organisation.

27. Very good support is given to learners and clients on care programmes, with excellent working relationships between employers, assessors and learners. On business

administration, engineering, and retailing, customer service and transportation programmes learner support is good. Visits are frequent and problems or issues reported to staff by clients or learners are dealt with promptly. Pastoral support for clients on foundation programmes is good.

28. Clients on land-based provision programmes have insufficient training towards formal qualifications. There are plans to provide NVQ units, but these have not been finalised.

29. Formal jobsearch training is unsatisfactory for clients on construction programmes. Jobsearch is not tailored to the needs of clients and they are not appropriately engaged during some jobsearch sessions. Teaching is unsatisfactory for clients on foundation programmes. Lessons are poorly planned and taught with not enough use of a good range of teaching methods or sufficient involvement of clients in the activities.

30. Resources are poorly managed for ICT learners and are inadequate for foundation clients. Some training rooms are too small and activities are disrupted due to noise. Computers do not have up-to-date industry standard software. There is insufficient access to ICT and the internet for foundation clients and ICT learners. Textbooks or learning materials are not routinely made available to learners on care programmes. There are insufficient resources for teaching and learning on foundation programmes for New Deal 18-24 and New Deal 25+.

31. There are insufficient staff to provide adequate training at some learning centres for ICT learners and to meet the needs of individual clients on foundation programmes. Actions to rectify some of the workload problems have not yet had time to impact on the care programme. There are insufficient work placements for ICT clients.

32. Programmes are not meeting effectively the individual needs of BET clients on foundation programmes and do not enable clients to develop appropriate skills to gain jobs. There is insufficient focus on providing BET clients with work placements.

33. Progress reviews are inconsistent for clients on the New Deal engineering programme. While some progress reviews are completed within appropriate timescales and to a satisfactory standard, some review paperwork is poorly completed or missing from client files. On- and off-the-job training for business administration learners are insufficiently integrated. Many workplace supervisors do not fully understand the requirements of the programme and off-the-job training is not clearly linked to workplace activity.

34. On business administration, ICT and care programmes, there are insufficient arrangements to identify and support learners who have additional literacy, numeracy language needs. Where support is identified it is not always recorded or provided.

35. There is insufficient planning and recording of learning for ICT learners and some learners on the retailing, customer service and transportation programmes. Learning plans do not record the individual needs and aims of learners and do not identify specific

targets for personal and other skills. Results of initial assessments are not recorded effectively to help with planning learning.

Leadership and management

36. **Internal communications are good.** Since the previous inspection, the company has made significant improvements. Communications are well structured to support an effective flow of information across the different levels of the company.

37. **Promotion of equal opportunities is good.** The company works well to implement its equal opportunities policy. Equal opportunities is covered well during staff and learners' induction. There is good celebration of cultural diversity in some learning centres.

38. **There is good development of a new quality assurance framework.** Company-wide quality assurance policies and procedures have been developed with a clear focus on learners' achievements. Detailed guidelines for some key processes such as induction and jobsearch have been developed to improve the consistency of the provision and against which performance can be monitored.

39. **Management of performance is inadequate across programmes and learning centres.** There are no clear management arrangements to identify and deal with unsatisfactory variations in practice or to ensure good practice. Pelcombe Training does not systematically set its own targets for retention and achievement based on performance and trends within the company, programmes and individual centres. Management of training was judged to be unsatisfactory in business administration.

40. **Arrangements for literacy, numeracy and language support are insufficiently developed.** Many staff are not appropriately qualified and some have insufficient experience of these skills. Arrangements to assess literacy and numeracy skills vary between learning centres and staff. Additional learning support is generally unstructured and not recorded. There is insufficient literacy, numeracy and language guidance and support for foundation staff. Tutors do not know how to implement the new curriculum, skills for life materials, or design schemes of work and learning programmes.

41. **Insufficient monitoring of equality of opportunity is carried out.** The use of equal opportunities data is inconsistent in the learning centres. Some learning centres have analysed the data for their area and produced reports and action plans to encourage widening participation from under-represented groups. However, the effects of these initiatives are not analysed by the provider and there is no designated member of staff available to co-ordinate these activities nationally to monitor outcomes.

42. Quality assurance processes are insufficiently established in all learning centres. Some managers do not know how to use the quality assurance system and do not comply with it. The application of the quality assurance procedures is inconsistent across the company. During the inspection all programme areas identified weaknesses in observations of training and the effectiveness of quality assurance systems. In

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construction, business administration, ICT and engineering, monitoring of subcontractors is weak.

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

Leadership and management

Strengths

- good internal communications
- good promotion of equality of opportunity
- good development of quality assurance framework

Weaknesses

- inadequate performance management across programmes and learning centres
- insufficient development of arrangements for additional learning support
- insufficient overall monitoring of equal opportunities
- insufficiently established quality assurance processes

Land-based provision

Strengths

- good practical and jobsearch training
- good use of projects that benefit the local community

Weaknesses

- low job outcomes
- insufficient training towards formal qualifications
- unsatisfactory management of land-based provision programmes

Construction

Strengths

- effective development of clients' skills
- high retention rates on adult learning programmes

Weaknesses

- inadequate recording of clients' progress and achievement
- unsatisfactory formal jobsearch training
- weak management of training

Engineering, technology & manufacturing

Strengths

- good development of learners' workplace skills
- good learner support
- good assessment practice for learners on work-based learning programmes for young people

Weaknesses

- low job outcomes for clients
- unsatisfactory progress reviews for some clients
- unsatisfactory monitoring of subcontractor

Business administration, management & professional

Strengths

- good development of IT skills
- good learner support
- good assessment practice for NVQs

Weaknesses

- poor job outcomes on adult learning programmes
- slow achievement of key skills on modern apprenticeships
- insufficient integration of on- and off-the-job training on modern apprenticeships
- insufficient additional learning support
- unsatisfactory management of training

Information & communications technology

Strengths

- very good development of IT skills
- good individual teaching

Weaknesses

- low job outcomes for clients
- poor management of resources
- insufficient additional learning support
- insufficient planning and recording of learning

Retailing, customer service & transportation

Strengths

- good retention rates on adult learning programmes
- good LGV and lift truck training
- good learner support

Weaknesses

- poor LGV licence achievements in some learning centres
- low achievement rates on work-based learning programmes for young people
- poor planning and co-ordination of programmes

Health, social care & public services

Strengths

- good on-the-job training
- good initial assessment for learners
- very good support

Weaknesses

- some slow progress
- insufficient resources
- no initial assessment of literacy, numeracy and language skills of learners on the employer training pilot programme

Foundation programmes

Strengths

- good pastoral support
- well-presented induction and jobsearch materials

Weaknesses

- low job outcomes for clients
- unsatisfactory teaching
- inadequate resources
- ineffective programmes to meet individual needs of BET clients
- insufficient literacy, numeracy and language guidance and support for staff

DETAILED REINSPECTION FINDINGS

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Grade 4

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

Strengths

- good internal communications
- good promotion of equality of opportunity
- good development of quality assurance framework

Weaknesses

- inadequate performance management across programmes and learning centres
- insufficient development of arrangements for additional learning support
- insufficient overall monitoring of equal opportunities
- insufficiently established quality assurance processes

43. Pelcombe Training has good internal communications. Since the previous inspection, the company has made significant improvements to the communication processes within the organisation. This was not identified in the self-assessment report. Communications are structured to support an effective flow of information across the different levels of the organisation. A well-planned schedule of staff meetings has been established. Frequent and regular staff meetings are held at the learning centres. Learning centre managers prepare detailed monthly reports based on a standard company format. The monthly learning centre reports provide clear information on performance, quality assurance, equality of opportunity and health and safety. These reports are used effectively during the monthly management meetings. These meetings also provide an effective forum for managers from all levels in the organisation to discuss issues and share ideas and information. Senior managers are kept up to date about the issues and activities at the local learning centres. Meetings are recorded and action-planning has recently been introduced. The company's quarterly newsletter has been further developed to provide a useful source of information concerning activities and developments within the company and staff are encouraged to contribute items.

44. Staff training and development procedures are now satisfactory. A corporate development function has been added to the company and includes responsibility for staff training. A comprehensive training needs analysis has been carried out. To meet the identified training needs, a staff development programme has been introduced. This includes equality of opportunity, health and safety, use of individual learning plans and staff appraisal. A plan of staff training needs has recently been developed to identify mandatory and optional training for specific job roles. This is used to plan and prioritise staff development. However, many staff have still not carried out sufficient training and

development.

45. Management of resources is generally satisfactory. However, some IT resources are poor and a programme of updating the IT equipment within the learning centres is being carried out but is not yet complete. Plans are in place to identify future IT requirements. Recruitment to rectify staff shortages at some learning centres is slow. Progress has recently been made in the recruitment of staff, but there are still some vacant posts in the organisation. Both of these issues were identified in the self-assessment.

46. Strategic planning has been developed since the previous inspection. The planning objectives now focus more effectively on learners' experiences and the plan has specific links with quality assurance and self-assessment. However, most of the objectives within the plan do not have measurable targets. The current strategic business plan includes clear information on the company's vision, mission and core values. Presentations on the plan have been made to members of staff.

47. The management of performance across programmes and learning is inadequate. There are no clear management arrangements to identify and deal with unsatisfactory variations in practice or to ensure good practice, such as in the planning of training. There is no consistency in how different learning centres and programmes operate. For example, the approach to target-setting varies between regions and between learning centres. Although the management of data has now improved and most learning centres are able to monitor performance effectively within programme areas, performance management is focused on contractual targets. The provider does not systematically set its own targets for retention and achievement rates, based on performance and trends within the company, the programmes and from individual learning centres. Insufficient use is made of the performance information available to identify and deal with issues. There are insufficient management strategies to develop and support performance, such as the sharing of good practice. A new appraisal system has recently been introduced that includes the identification of individual objectives. However, these are not always sufficiently specific or measurable. As part of development planning, a need to review the company's human resources function has been identified, but this process has not been completed.

48. The arrangements for literacy, numeracy and language support are not sufficiently developed. This weakness was not identified in the self-assessment report. Many of the staff working in this area are not appropriately qualified and some have insufficient experience in, for example, identifying and supporting learners who have dyslexia. The need for staff training has been identified and planned for, but this is at an early stage of implementation. Arrangements to assess literacy and numeracy skills vary between training centres and staff. For example, some learners complete an initial assessment of their literacy and numeracy skills before they start their programme, and others carry this out within the first weeks of their programme. Some learners are not assessed. Not all learning centres provide specific support for literacy, numeracy and language skills and refer learners to other providers. There is no consistent approach to the referral process. In some learning centres this is an informal process and is not monitored. Where additional learning support needs are identified, these are not always recorded on

individual learning plans. Some learners whose additional learning needs have been recorded on their individual learning plans, have not received additional support. Some learners with specific learning difficulties are not receiving support from specialist staff. Additional learning support is generally unstructured, not recorded and learners are not set enough targets. Data are not collected on additional learning support. Following the previous inspection, some progress has been made to develop the company's strategy for additional learning support. There is now a basic skills co-ordinator. A working group has recently developed and piloted a new induction for programmes that focus on literacy, numeracy and language skills. This group has started a process of sharing training materials. It is too early to judge the effectiveness of these developments.

Equality of opportunity

Contributory grade 3

49. Promotion of equal opportunities is good. The company works well to implement its equal opportunities policy, which covers appropriately issues such as employee and client procedures, and relevant government acts. It also outlines individual responsibilities and the provider's commitment to providing appropriate training for staff and clients. There is no reference to the Equal Pay Act 1970 or the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000. The staff development programme includes equal opportunities training. Some staff have received this training, and planned future sessions will cover all staff.

50. Equal opportunities is covered well during staff and learners' induction. Induction materials have improved since the previous inspection. As well as a specific induction for BET clients, there is an induction for those who speak English as an additional language that uses a range of appropriate images to assist understanding. Three case studies are used to discuss issues relating to discrimination, harassment and stereotyping and many clients are able to recall well this information. The good complaints procedures, identified at the previous inspection, are still in place. Following the previous inspection, recruitment data are now collected and analysed and reports are produced for all learning centre managers. The provider also now uses a diversity profile to aid recruitment.

51. There is good celebration of cultural diversity in some learning centres through the use of clients' projects. These include the making and displaying of a range of national costumes, the production and sharing of a range different foods and the production of notices in a range of other languages. Some learning centres provide appropriate training for staff who deal with particular clients such as ex-offenders, or those with drug or alcohol dependency. These initiatives are featured and publicised in the company newsletter. However, these examples of good practice are not routinely shared and there are no company-wide arrangements to co-ordinate such activities.

52. There is insufficient monitoring of overall equality of opportunity, a weakness identified at the previous inspection. The use of equal opportunities data is inconsistent in the learning centres. Some learning centres have analysed the data for their area and produced reports and action plans to encourage widening participation from under-represented groups. However, the effects of these initiatives are not analysed by the

provider and there is no designated member of staff available to co-ordinate or monitor outcomes. There is not enough evidence of effective co-ordination of this activity on a national basis. There is no procedure for dealing with clients with identified additional learning needs such as dyslexia. Although many learning centres have good access for people with mobility difficulties, responsibilities for the improvement of access for disabled people have not been planned and co-ordinated effectively across the company.

53. Following the previous inspection, work-placement providers and subcontractors are assessed before being used. Part of the process includes arrangements for equality of opportunity. Where there are no policies in place these organisations are encouraged to adopt the provider's policy. The provider has also produced a range of questions used by staff to monitor equal opportunities during progress reviews.

Quality assurance

Contributory grade 4

54. One director has overall responsibility for the quality assurance framework and for ensuring that it is reviewed and maintained effectively. A quality assurance manager supports the director in the implementation of the policies and procedures and is currently being aided by the newly formed business development team. Learning centre managers are responsible for local implementation of the procedures. The quality assurance policies and procedures have been revised since the previous inspection and many of the key processes were introduced three months before this inspection.

55. Since the previous inspection much work has been done to develop a new quality assurance framework. The quality assurance manual is very detailed and provides a good framework to quality assure the work of the provider. Company-wide quality assurance policies and procedures have been developed with a clear focus on learners' achievements. Detailed guidelines for some key processes, such as induction and jobsearch, have been developed to improve the consistency of the service and against which performance can be monitored. The quality assurance team carries out assessment visits to learning centres at five-month, eight-month or 12-month intervals depending on whether the learning centre has been assessed as low, medium or high risk. These three-day visits are very thorough and are used to assure all key processes and to develop action plans. Staff are involved in contributing to the ongoing development and revision of the quality assurance processes.

56. Internal verification is satisfactory, a weakness identified in the previous inspection. The internal co-ordinator is responsible for managing internal verification and supporting assessors and verifiers. The organisation has developed appropriate systems in line with current guidance and include sampling plans and standardisation meetings. There is a planned schedule of meetings for assessors and verifiers attended by the director.

57. The quality assurance arrangements are insufficiently established in all learning centres. Arrangements for quality assurance were identified as ineffective in the previous inspection. Work to develop a new quality assurance framework has taken place, but it is not yet being used effectively and some managers do not comply with it. The application of the quality assurance procedures across the provider is inconsistent. Some

weaknesses identified through self-assessment or on quality assurance visits are not adequately tackled. For example, in one learning centre the recording of progress reviews was identified as a weakness and an action plan was put in place. Staff received appropriate training and client files were sampled, but weaknesses in the recording of the reviews continue to be identified. During the inspection all programme areas identified weaknesses in the establishment of observation of training and the effectiveness of the quality assurance systems. In construction, business administration, ICT and engineering, the monitoring of subcontractors is weak.

58. Some managers and staff have received training in the observation system. However, this system has not been implemented in all the learning centres and some staff have not been observed. Some observations are weak and there is not enough emphasis on learning in the observations. Some staff are not occupationally competent for the sessions they observe. When weaknesses are identified, follow-up observations are performed. However, insufficient action is taken to improve weaknesses. Observations carried out by the provider do not identify any unsatisfactory sessions. Of those lessons observed, 24 per cent were judged to be less than satisfactory.

59. In the previous inspection the monitoring of subcontractors was identified as a weakness. In the three months before the inspection, the provider introduced a revised system to monitor subcontractors. The system includes checks on the training provided by the subcontractor as part of the provider approval and six-monthly review procedures. However, this does not include sufficient monitoring of current training through observations or by monitoring progression and achievement.

60. The further development and installation of the management information system in all learning centres has recently improved the use of data to measure performance and plan improvements. These data are being used by some learning centres to plan actions and improvements. For example, in one learning centre, data indicated that many clients were not gaining jobs. A work-placement officer was appointed to help clients find employment and job outcomes have significantly improved. However, data are used inconsistently across programmes and learning centres.

61. Feedback from clients is collected after induction, mid-programme and at the end of programme. This information is analysed and has been used to plan improvements in some learning centres. Systems to collect annual feedback from subcontractors and work-placement providers have also recently been introduced, although not all learning centres have carried out these procedures.

62. The self-assessment process is satisfactory. The latest report was produced in January 2004. Staff and managers were involved in the development of a learning centre-based self-assessment report. This was collated to form a national self-assessment report and development plan. Staff in construction were not sufficiently involved in the self-assessment process. The quality assurance team validated the self-assessment reports and learning centres were supported in the production of local development plans. The provider's development plan was reviewed in March, which led to changes in local development plans. These local plans are reviewed each month as part of the learning

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centre team meetings. The quality assurance team meets quarterly to update and regularly review progress against the development plan, and a more general team meeting is held each month. Many of the weaknesses identified by inspectors were identified through self-assessment, but inspectors gave lower grades than those in the report for most areas.

AREAS OF LEARNING

Land-based provision

Grade 4

Programmes inspected	Number of learners	Contributory grade
New Deal 18-24	14	4
New Deal 25+ and work-based learning for adults	2	4

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

Strengths

- good practical and jobsearch training
- good use of projects that benefit the local community

Weaknesses

- low job outcomes
- insufficient training towards formal qualifications
- unsatisfactory management of land-based provision programmes

Achievement and standards

63. Job outcomes are low, a weakness identified in the self-assessment report. The environment task force option has been running since 2002. Of the 66 clients who started in that year, 28 were retained of whom 13 completed their programme and 19 gained jobs. Of the 56 clients who started in 2003, nine completed their programme and nine gained jobs, with 14 still in learning. Of the six New Deal 25+ clients who enrolled in 2001-02, four were retained, one completed their programme and one gained a job. Of the five who started in 2003, none have gained jobs and one is still in learning.

64. Client achievements are satisfactory. On the project at Dewsbury, clients have a good understanding of health and safety and use appropriately a variety of hand tools to clear tree stumps. In one jobsearch training session observed, clients carried out good discussions and applied their own experiences well to solve problems.

Quality of education and training

65. Practical and jobsearch training is good. Training is planned well and fully involves clients. During practical skills training there is good and consistent emphasis on health and safety. Initial training is provided during the induction to the site and is reinforced during all subsequent practical sessions. Good emphasis is placed on the safe and correct use and storage of all hand tools. This is further reinforced by effective use of

question and answer techniques during the practical sessions to monitor understanding. The provider has recently introduced a series of modules to standardise jobsearch training. These include lesson plans, explanation of content and knowledge base, teaching methods, hand outs, exercises and overhead transparencies. There are 10, two- or three-hour sessions during which clients are fully involved. Staff have recently received training in the use of these modules. Staff make good use of these modules during training sessions, for example, on getting and keeping a job.

66. Good use is made of projects that benefit the local community, a strength identified in the self-assessment report. There is an effective link between the Huddersfield and Dewsbury learning centres and the Earlsheaton churchyard restoration project to clear an overgrown churchyard and create a garden of remembrance. At the Wisbech centre, there is a link with the Healthy Living Centre in King's Lynn for horticultural and decoration training and with the Sandringham Estate for environmental conservation training.

67. Resources are satisfactory. There are adequate numbers of staff to provide the training. However, no staff are appropriately qualified or experienced in land-based industries. Most staff have previous training experience and a formal training qualification. Staff who start without such qualifications are supported in obtaining them. Resources at the Dewsbury learning centre are adequate for jobsearch and literacy, numeracy and language training. However, there is not enough internet access. At the Earlsheaton churchyard restoration project there are adequate hand tools and on-site facilities, but no suitable facility for wet-weather activities. There are, however, plans to use a local community hall. At Wisbech, the Healthy Living Centre and Sandringham estate combine to provide a good practical training facility and the learning centre provides good wet-weather facilities.

68. Comprehensive individual learning plans are completed at the start of the programme and are updated following progress reviews. However, they do not adequately record individual clients' background and experience. The same programme and targets are included on all individual learning plans for a group of clients. Targets are set during progress reviews for achievement by the next review, but they do not have sufficiently specific objectives to enable an evaluative monitoring of progress.

69. Not enough clients have taken up training for their literacy, numeracy and language skills. All clients are assessed for these skills on entry. Currently at Dewsbury two clients have been diagnosed as needing additional literacy skills support, but this has not been included in the targets in their individual learning plans and both have declined the offer of additional learning support. At the Wisbech learning centre, Jobcentre Plus provide literacy, numeracy and language skills training. Mentoring at the Huddersfield and Dewsbury learning centres is subcontracted to a specialist organisation. A similar arrangement is in place at Wisbech where individual support is provided. None of the clients on land-based provision has made use of this support.

70. There is insufficient training towards formal qualifications, a weakness identified in the self-assessment report. Additional arrangements have now been made to enable

clients to work towards a minimum of three units of an NVQ at level 1 or 2 in amenity horticulture, through training provided on site by the National Trust at Nostell Priory. However, no clients are currently placed with the National Trust. There are plans to use the Nostell Priory site for clients from Dewsbury and Huddersfield. Clients on other programmes have access to a range of awards including first aid, safe lifting, and health and safety certificates. Current clients from Dewsbury, Huddersfield and Wisbech are on programmes that lead only to these certificates, together with an internally validated use of a trimmer certificate at Dewsbury. There are plans to provide NVQ units at Dewsbury and Huddersfield, but these have not been finalised and the awards are not included in clients' individual learning plans. No NVQ units have been achieved to date in either amenity horticulture or environmental conservation. No provider staff are qualified to assess or verify these awards.

Leadership and management

71. The management of land-based provision is unsatisfactory. Quality assurance of the provision is not effective. The self-assessment report accurately identified the key strengths and weaknesses. However, clear plans from the self-assessment report have not yet been implemented. The current project at Huddersfield and Dewsbury started in early March 2004 with no training leading to a recognised qualification in place. A planned review of the content of land-based provision programmes has been postponed. There is no specific system to standardise the provision between the different learning centres. There is not enough sharing of good practice between learning centres. Equal opportunities issues are covered during induction, training and some jobsearch sessions, but are not routinely discussed during progress reviews. Not enough work has been carried out to promote the provision to under-represented groups.

Construction

Grade 4

Programmes inspected	Number of learners	Contributory grade
New Deal 25+ and work-based learning for adults	26	4
New Deal 18-24	24	4

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

Strengths

- effective development of clients' skills
- high retention rates on adult learning programmes

Weaknesses

- inadequate recording of clients' progress and achievement
- unsatisfactory formal jobsearch training
- weak management of training

Achievement and standards

72. Client's skills are developed effectively on construction programmes. Adult clients on longer programmes develop good craft skills. For example, one client has made good progress towards completing a foundation award in solid plastering and another demonstrated good practical skills in the construction of a stair flight. New Deal 18-24 clients have a good understanding of their work and at one project there are several examples of satisfactorily completed groundwork such as paths and steps. This is an ongoing project that enables new clients to see the skills they will be developing, and the more experienced clients can continue to see the value and quality of the work they have completed. Most clients discuss with staff their skills development and career aims and demonstrate good self-confidence.

73. Retention rates on the work-based learning for adults programmes are high. In 2002-03 and 2003-04, 65 per cent and 35 per cent of New deal 25+ clients were retained, respectively. A further 35 per cent are still in training for 2003. Achievement of qualifications and recorded job outcomes are satisfactory for both main programmes. Achievement of qualifications in 2002-03 is 46 per cent for adult clients and 46 per cent for New Deal 18-24 environment task force clients. The number of job outcomes recorded in 2002-03 for adult clients is lower at 33 per cent and 40 per cent for environment task force clients. For the current year, the number of job outcomes for environment task force clients is good at 50 per cent.

74. Recording of client progress and achievement is unsatisfactory. At the main learning centre no formal record is made of clients' practical activities. Although clients have completed a range of practical projects, they are not able to record this work to show

potential employers. Learning plans are not consistently updated. For example, some plans do not record achievement of certificates and others do not record dates of achievement. Some progress reviews give specific information of client progress and set identifiable targets. However, many are completed with only general statements relating to clients' work or do not refer to vocational training. One file did not contain an individual learning plan or progress review records.

Quality of education and training

75. Vocational training is satisfactory. Tutors make good use of practical equipment and clients are fully involved in the training sessions. However, tutors do not take sufficient account of the needs of different clients, such as those with poor literacy skills.

76. Training and assessment resources are satisfactory. One subcontractor has good workshop resources. Projects provide clients with a satisfactory range of training activities. Some subcontractors provide good training resources, such as current industrial standard plant and equipment. However, some welfare facilities such as the toilet facilities and access to food are not adequate. Reinforcement and promotion of health and safety is satisfactory. All clients wear personal protective clothing as needed and are adequately aware of health and safety issues. However, this is not routinely reinforced during progress reviews.

77. Support arrangements are adequate to meet the needs of clients. Initial assessment of the learners' literacy and numeracy skills is carried out during the formulation of the learning plan. Effective support is provided for computer-based, externally assessed health and safety tests. Clients with literacy needs are fully briefed on how to request this support at the assessment centres and this has enabled some clients to successfully complete this test. However, for clients with identified needs, much of support within training is informal.

78. Formal jobsearch training is unsatisfactory. Clients do not make good use of jobsearch. Jobsearch resources are unsatisfactory at one learning centre and are not tailored to the needs of construction clients. There are not enough resources at one learning centre for the number of clients. For example, 12 clients were taught formally in a room without sufficient seating or desk space. These clients then had access to only four working computers to produce curriculum vitae. One jobsearch session was disrupted by the late arrival of some clients. Clients are not appropriately engaged during some jobsearch sessions and inappropriate behaviour was not dealt with appropriately by the tutor. Some learning materials do not make adequate use of images to illustrate various issues.

Leadership and management

79. There is weak management of training at the learning centres. Training provided by subcontractors is not reviewed effectively. For example, one provider did not know that any monitoring had taken place, although one monitoring visit had been completed.

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One subcontractor has been observed only once in 12 months and only then by a non-vocational specialist. This observation was not adequate. None of the area managers has vocational competence in construction. Communication is poor between Pelcombe Training and some subcontractors. Some clients are not provided with the training initially advised by the provider.

80. There is no formal co-ordination of the construction programmes, a weakness identified in the self-assessment report. However, no staff have met to discuss the action plan developed to rectify this. The action plan does not tackle weaknesses identified in sufficient detail.

81. Promotion of equal opportunities is satisfactory. It forms part of the induction process and is regularly reinforced. However, equal opportunities is not formally monitored during most progress reviews.

Engineering, technology & manufacturing**Grade 3**

Programmes inspected	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Work-based learning for young people	25	2
New Deal 18-24	11	3
New Deal 25+ and work-based learning for adults	7	3

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

Strengths

- good development of learners' workplace skills
- good learner support
- good assessment practice for learners on work-based learning programmes for young people

Weaknesses

- low job outcomes for clients
- unsatisfactory progress reviews for some clients
- unsatisfactory monitoring of subcontractor

Achievement and standards

82. Development of learners' workplace skills is good, a strength identified at the previous inspection. During the initial stages of training, learners work with skilled practitioners to develop their practical skills and learners make significant gains in self-confidence. Learners at one company are routinely moved to different departments every three months, gaining broad-based training with frequent assessment. At another company learners develop good skills using electronic media. Some learners work on rebuilding cars. Where evidence cannot be collected directly from the workplace, provider staff arrange good work-placement activities to gain the knowledge required. The provider also has its own production area that manufactures components for the water industry. This is used to provide valuable work experience.

83. Learners working towards NVQs at level 3 work on a wide variety of tasks and complex technical work. Employers give learners time to complete their portfolios at work and ensure they are able to collect evidence across all of their units. Portfolios contain good workplace evidence including photographs and witness testimony with extensive evidence of projects and tasks carried out in the workplace. This evidence also contributes towards their key skills qualification.

84. The retention rate for foundation modern apprentices was 32 per cent in 2000. Of those learners who started in 2002-03, 86 per cent are still in learning. The retention rate

for advanced modern apprentices in 2000 was 78 per cent with 75 per cent of learners who started between 2001 and 2003 still in learning.

85. Achievement rates on the modern apprenticeship programmes were low on the previous inspection. Although it is too early to judge improvements, learners on these programmes are now making satisfactory progress in all aspects of the framework.

86. Job outcomes are low for clients, but have improved since the previous inspection. In 2002-03, 24 per cent of clients on the New Deal 18-24 programme and 32 per cent of clients on New Deal 25+ gained jobs. In 2003-04, 21 per cent of clients on the New Deal 18-24 programme gained jobs and 21 per cent are still in learning. For New Deal 25+ 14 per cent gained jobs and 32 per cent are still in learning. The attendance rate on this programme is low. Over the inspection period the maximum attendance was 40 per cent of clients attending any of the planned sessions.

Quality of education and training

87. Learner support is good. On the New Deal programme there is extensive individual support from pastoral and vocational tutors who help to ensure that clients progress at an appropriate pace towards their individual targets. Some clients who do not gain jobs still attend the learning centre after completion of the programme to receive support and further develop their skills. For work-based learners there is good pastoral support with effective individual tutoring. Learners are monitored well to develop their personal and learning skills. Employers provide learners with time in the workplace to complete their portfolios and collect evidence. Some learners complete additional qualifications or progress onto higher education supported by the employer, in line with their business needs.

88. Assessment is good on the work-based learning programmes. Regular progress review visits are carried out in the workplace at least every four weeks by assessors. All workplace supervisors have good knowledge of the progress of their learners. Effective links between on- and off-the-job training are reinforced during assessment visits. Staff work well to develop learners' understanding of the training programme and the NVQ framework. The review paperwork clearly identifies learners' progress in terms of unit achievement, NVQ, key skills and college progress. Specific and measurable vocational targets are set and are monitored. Good use of workplace evidence is made by cross-referencing to key skills and other units to cover effectively evidence requirements. All learners attend one of three local colleges to gain their technical certificate. Training advisers at the provider closely monitor learners individual progress towards completion with appropriate support when required.

89. Teaching is satisfactory. There is effective linking of background knowledge and practical training. Questioning is used well to monitor and assess learners' knowledge and understanding.

90. Learners' initial assessment and induction are satisfactory. Initial assessment covers

key skills and literacy, numeracy and language skills to enable placement on the correct programme and to identify any additional support requirements. Induction takes place at the employers' premises and includes basic health and safety, equal opportunities training, and an introduction to the NVQs.

91. Progress reviews are unsatisfactory for some clients. While some reviews are completed within appropriate timescales and to a satisfactory standard, some are not. Some review records are poorly completed or are missing from client files. Although reviews are planned to take place every four weeks, they do not always take place on the planned date. One client has been on programme five months and has had only one recorded progress review.

Leadership and management

92. Staff are appropriately experienced and clearly understand their roles and responsibilities. Management information has improved since the previous inspection and there is satisfactory recording of learners' progress. Internal verification is satisfactory and meets awarding body guidance. All learners are internally verified at least once a year and the full range of units is covered annually. Learners' understanding of equality of opportunity is satisfactory. All staff were involved in the writing of the self-assessment report. Although much work has been carried out, it is too early judge its effectiveness.

93. Monitoring of the subcontractor is unsatisfactory, a weakness not identified in the self-assessment report. Although an unsigned contract exists between the two parties, and termly reports are available, no other information is requested or provided on the subcontractor's provision. Learners' progress with their off-the-job training is collected either from the learner or from the subcontractor by the assessors on an informal basis.

Business administration, management & professional

Grade 4

Programmes inspected	Number of learners	Contributory grade
New Deal 18-24	64	3
New Deal 25+ and work-based learning for adults	49	4
Work-based learning for young people	35	4
Other government-funded provision	29	3

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

Strengths

- good development of IT skills
- good learner support
- good assessment practice for NVQs

Weaknesses

- poor job outcomes on adult learning programmes
- slow achievement of key skills on modern apprenticeships
- insufficient integration of on- and off-the-job training on modern apprenticeships
- insufficient additional learning support
- unsatisfactory management of training

Achievement and standards

94. All learners develop good IT skills. This training is provided in the learning centres, by subcontractors and in some workplaces. The qualifications are appropriate to those seeking administrative jobs. For example, people returning to work after many years complete an exam-based computer course. Learners who have never used a computer and those with poor keyboard skills receive appropriate support. They gain good self-confidence and many complete their IT qualifications. Tutors allow each person to proceed at their own pace and provide individual help where necessary. Learners and clients are encouraged to help each other with supervision from their tutor. The company has arranged and funded some clients to complete an accounting qualification with a neighbouring training provider.

95. Job outcomes are poor on adult learning programmes. In 2002-03, only 25 per cent of adults on Jobcentre Plus provision gained jobs. This improved from 13 per cent in 2001-02. In 2003-04, only 18 per cent of clients gained jobs and 23 per cent are still in learning. On New Deal 18-24 programmes in 2002-03 achievement is better with 31 per cent of clients gaining jobs and 1 per cent still in learning. However, retention rates on adult learning programmes have improved significantly from 20 per cent to 72 per cent between 2000 and 2002.

96. Retention rates on the New Deal 18-24 programme are satisfactory. Retention rates are improving for foundation and advanced modern apprentices. In 2000-01, only 45 per cent of advanced modern apprentices stayed until the end of their programme. Of those who started in 2001-02, 67 per cent are still in learning. Achievement rates at the previous inspection were low and work implemented to improve achievement has not yet impacted on overall achievements.

Quality of education and training

97. Clients and learners on all programmes receive good support in the learning centre and in the workplace, a strength identified at the previous inspection. Assessors visit them frequently while they are on work placement and when they are permanently employed. Learners complete a comprehensive initial assessment. Their individual learning styles are identified and care is taken to match all training to their needs. Although additional literacy and numeric support is provided, many staff do not have the relevant qualifications. Off-the-job training is provided in the workplace for those learners who are unable to come to the learning centre or prefer not to learn in a group. Problems or issues reported to staff by clients or learners are dealt with promptly. Many employers and workplace supervisors help their learners and clients progress well in their work placements and jobs. Provider staff ensure an appropriate learning environment and provide additional practical support to help learners and clients obtain work placements and jobs. Examples of help include buying a complete outfit of clothes suited to an office environment, paying daily for a taxi where rural transport is inadequate and providing an orthopaedic chair for a severely disabled client.

98. There is good assessment practice on NVQs. Learners are visited in the workplace as often as required, with appointments set and adhered to by assessors and learners. Clear targets are set and are understood by learners and by some workplace supervisors. Progress reviews are effective and good progress is made against targets. Learners are helped to identify a wide range of diverse evidence. Assessors carry out frequent observations in the workplace, which are cross-referenced to a variety of units within the NVQ. Assessment and review processes have improved since the previous inspection. A single form is now used to plan and record all aspects of each learner's work. Learners fully understand what is required to make good progress. Some employers use these records to help them organise appropriate additional work experience for their learners.

99. The standard of teaching and learning varies between learning centres and tutors. Resources are generally satisfactory. Action has been taken to rectify some of the resource problems identified in the previous inspection. There are now sufficient staff, although arrangements for covering absences are not adequate. The tutor for a technical certificate class does not have an appropriate teaching qualification and no specific training has been planned. Most training rooms provide good accommodation. However, one IT suite does not have adequate ventilation. Most learning centres have sufficient computers, but some hardware and software are not to industry standard. The

upgrading and replacement of equipment is currently taking place. Although the provision meets the needs and interests of most clients and learners, in some learning centres business administration clients complete IT qualifications only, but in other learning centres are also offered business administration NVQ units.

100. Achievement of key skills by learners is slow, a weakness identified at the previous inspection. Many learners do not start their key skills until they have completed at least three units of their NVQ. The assessment of key skills is not sufficiently integrated with the NVQ assessment and contributes to this slow progress. The achievement of key skills is usually after the achievement of the NVQ on modern apprenticeship programmes. Some moderator visits do not take place at appropriate times.

101. On- and off-the-job training on modern apprenticeships are insufficiently integrated. Although employers provide on-the-job training, they do not have a formal on-the-job learning plan. Many workplace supervisors do not fully understand the requirements of the programme or aims for off-the-job training. Off-the-job training is not clearly linked to workplace activity. Most workplace supervisors do not attend progress reviews. However, they do see copies of the review record and provide learners and clients with help to collect evidence.

102. There is insufficient additional learning support for clients who require additional literacy and numeric support. The diagnostic tests used by learning centres that hold contracts to provide literacy, numeracy and language development, are not routinely used with learners entering business administration programmes. Where support is identified it is not necessarily provided. Staff are not trained to develop the literacy and numeric skills of clients. Many staff provide informal support and guidance to learners without accurate knowledge of learners' skills. Much of informal support provided is not recorded. One learning centre uses diagnostic tests well and provides support through specialist staff.

Leadership and management

103. Management of training is unsatisfactory. The application of company policies and processes is not consistent across all learning centres and programmes. Information is not used consistently to set and monitor retention and achievement targets. Subcontractors are used in two learning centres to provide assessment of the administration level 2 NVQ. Initial agreements and information collected from subcontractors are used to assess the training and services, but ongoing quality assurance activities are inadequate. Further quality assurance procedures have not been implemented. A new quality assurance system is operating but is not fully effective. For example, the poor provision of a programme was identified, but no action was taken. Good practice is not shared sufficiently between learning centres and programmes. The new processes for the initial assessment of modern apprentices are not being applied to other programmes.

104. There is satisfactory internal verification with systems in place that meet the

awarding bodies' requirements. Regular meetings of the business administration team are used to standardise assessment practice and tackle issues. External verifiers' reports are acted on promptly. The self-assessment report identified some of the strengths and weaknesses identified during reinspection.

105. Equal opportunities within the area of learning is satisfactory. Staff demonstrate a good understanding of equal opportunities. However, some learners do not show an adequate recall of the briefings they have had during and after induction on equal opportunities.

Information & communications technology

Grade 4

Programmes inspected	Number of learners	Contributory grade
New Deal 18-24	36	4
Other government-funded provision	24	4
New Deal 25+ and work-based learning for adults	17	4

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

Strengths

- very good development of IT skills
- good individual teaching

Weaknesses

- low job outcomes for clients
- poor management of resources
- insufficient additional learning support
- insufficient planning and recording of learning

Achievement and standards

106. Retention rates on the New Deal programmes are good, although data are only available for one complete year. On the New Deal 18-24 programme, 62 per cent of clients were retained in 2002-03, and all of these completed their planned learning. The retention rate for 2003-04 is currently 20 per cent with 40 per cent still in learning. On the New Deal 25+ programme, all nine clients who started the programme during 2002-03 were retained, but only three completed their planned learning. The retention rate for 2003-04 is currently 29 per cent with 59 per cent still in learning. The employer training pilot started in January 2004. Of the 27 learners who started, 24 are still in learning. Job outcomes are low with only 22 per cent of New Deal 25+ clients and 33 per cent of New Deal 18-24 clients who started during 2002-03 gaining jobs.

107. Clients develop very good IT skills. Many have little or no previous skills or knowledge and make good progress. Clients fully understand the relevance of their new skills to the workplace and how they will help them gain jobs. Some clients develop very advanced skills, such as graphics, web design and computer maintenance, which are well above their planned achievement level. Some clients achieve their target qualification quickly and take additional modules to enhance their learning.

Quality of education and training

108. Individual teaching is good. Learners are taught in classes with up to a maximum of 12 in each group. Learners work through training materials at their own pace and receive good individual support when required. Tutors fully understand the needs of individual learners and give good, clear explanations. They ensure a good learning environment and fully involve all learners in all activities. Tutors make good use of clear demonstrations that the learners then carry out themselves.

109. Training materials are satisfactory. There is a wide range of paper-based materials available at all of the learning centres including additional exercises for learners who need further practice before taking the assignments. However, some learners find them difficult to follow and one book does not cover the full syllabus.

110. The range of courses provided is satisfactory. However, clients at some learning centres who want to take additional modules or move to a higher level are not always able to. Clients at one subcontractor develop a wide range of high level skills through the provision of additional courses. Jobsearch provision for clients is satisfactory, but not sufficiently demanding for some clients.

111. Resources are poorly managed. Some learning centres do not have enough computers. One subcontractor is having work carried out on its premises and alternative training accommodation is being used. Computers are currently in two rooms with one tutor teaching clients in both rooms simultaneously. Clients are unable to access their previous work which is stored on the hard drives of computers currently in storage. Not all computers have internet access. Although computers with internet access are available at all learning centres for jobsearch, these computers are not available for training and clients are not able to develop their skills in this area. Computers do not have up-to-date industry standard software. Computers at some sites are out of date. Two sites do not have colour printers. Some sites do not have a video projector and formal training sessions are taught using a computer screen and black and white overhead projector. At two sites, the computer chairs are not fully adjustable and do not meet health and safety requirements. Most sites have only one IT tutor and holiday cover has to be arranged using staff from another learning centre. Two learning centres share one IT tutor. Clients do not receive adequate training at these learning centres and are expected to work on their own for half the week when the tutor is at the other learning centre. They do not receive regular feedback on their work. Clients on the New Deal 18-24 voluntary sector option are placed with a subcontracted training provider for their work experience. This subcontractor also provides their IT training. There are insufficient work placements available, to clients on this option, that are distinctly separate from the training environment.

112. There is insufficient additional learning support. There is no initial assessment for learners on the employer training pilot of literacy, numeric and language skills and not all clients have these skills assessed at the start of their programme. Where this initial assessment has been carried out, details are not consistently recorded on individual

learning plans. Many learners have low literacy, numeracy and language skills levels and there is no plan to improve their skills in these areas. Appropriate provision and support is not available at all sites. One client who speaks English as an additional language is attending a learning centre where although appropriate support is available, it has not been offered. One learner on the employer training pilot identified himself as dyslexic, but has not been given any additional support.

113. There is insufficient planning and recording of learning. Learning plans do not record the individual needs and aims of learners and do not identify specific targets for personal and other skills. Results of initial assessments are not recorded fully, and some learners on the employer training pilot are on inappropriate programmes. These learners have little or no computer skills and are working towards a level 2 qualification. They are making very slow progress. The review process is inconsistent and client feedback is not recorded. Where training is subcontracted, the review process does not fully involve the provider and the subcontractor. Progress reviews for clients on New Deal 18-24 do not include specific short-term targets. No reviews have taken place for 16 of the learners who started the employer training pilot in January 2004. Individual learning plans are not consistently updated following reviews or other changes.

Leadership and management

114. There are regular minuted meetings and staff are involved in the self-assessment process. Management information is not used to routinely monitor retention and achievement rates. Staff are not set individual targets for retention and achievement. Equal opportunities is satisfactory and all learners receive the standard company induction. Not all learning centres carry out regular observation of training activities as required by the company procedures. The procedures for subcontractors have not yet been fully implemented. Monitoring of subcontractors is weak and has not identified weaknesses in some subcontractors' premises and in the provision of training. In one learning centre, clients have completed the course but their achievements have not been accredited as approval has not yet been granted for the qualifications.

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

Programmes inspected	Number of learners	Contributory grade
New Deal 25+ and work-based learning for adults	195	3
New Deal 18-24	62	3
Work-based learning for young people	36	4

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

Strengths

- good retention rates on adult learning programmes
- good LGV and lift truck training
- good learner support

Weaknesses

- poor LGV licence achievements in some learning centres
- low achievement rates on work-based learning programmes for young people
- poor planning and co-ordination of programmes

Achievement and standards

115. Pass rates on the lift truck basic certificates are good. In 2002-03, pass rates showed an improving trend from previous years. Data produced and validated at individual learning centres are available, but there are no national data.

116. Retention rates are good on adult learning programmes. Between 2000 and 2003, retention rates have ranged from 59 per cent to 69 per cent with an average of 64 per cent. Achievement of jobs over the same period has been low but is improving. In 2002-03, 33 per cent of clients gained jobs. In 2003-04, 24 per cent of clients gained jobs, with 26 per cent still on programme. Retention of clients on New Deal 18-24 programmes over the same period is satisfactory. Although achievement of jobs has been low, the trend of achievement is improving, with 39 per cent of 2002-03 clients gaining jobs. In 2003-04, 26 per cent of clients gained jobs, with 26 per cent still in learning. Attendance and punctuality are satisfactory. Clients on these programmes gain good self-confidence and have a strong commitment to work.

117. Achievement of LGV licences is poor. Achievements at one learning centre increased from 17 per cent to 19 per cent and from 31 per cent to 38 per cent at another. There are significantly higher outcomes at other centres. Overall the achievement of LGV licences across the company is satisfactory.

118. Achievement rates on all work-based learning programmes for young people are

low. On the advanced apprenticeship programme, 19 learners have started since 1999, none have achieved a full framework and only three have achieved the main NVQ. In the same period, 61 learners started a foundation modern apprenticeship with only one achieving a full framework and three achieving the main NVQ. Since 1999 only four learners on NVQ-only programmes have achieved an NVQ from the 59 who started. Current learners are making much better progress towards the NVQ and key skills elements of their programmes. Regular training towards the technical certificate of the apprenticeship programmes is now taking place.

Quality of education and training

119. LGV and lift truck training are good. Pelcombe Training subcontracts its LGV and lift truck training. LGV-qualified and experienced instructors provide good driving instruction. Clients are given clear instructions with good reinforcement to ensure routine practice. Effective instruction is given in public road driving and at a remote practice site. Training in reversing and emergency stop exercises is particularly good. Clients are encouraged to self-evaluate their performance and mistakes are corrected appropriately. Mock tests are used well to help clients prepare and practise for the test. Lift truck training is good. The training areas are clean, spacious, well lit and well laid out. The well-qualified and experienced instructors provide good support. They give clear instructions and advice about lift truck positioning and manoeuvring. Reviews of progress are good. Clients can access good additional experience on work placements if they pass their test to prepare them for work.

120. Learner support is good, a strength identified at the previous inspection. Visits by learning co-ordinators and assessors are frequent and are scheduled to meet the needs of the individual learner or client. Visits are normally every two weeks, but learners and clients who need additional coaching or motivational support, receive visits more regularly. Clients also meet their assessor or learning co-ordinators when they attend the learning centre for jobsearch every week. Assessors and learning co-ordinators are readily contactable by telephone. Some learners and clients have received very good support in relation to confidential personal issues. Clients at some learning centres are also well supported in gaining additional qualifications. Some clients on lift truck training programmes have achieved IT qualifications to enhance their employability. Some have not achieved any formal qualifications but have developed keyboard, mouse and other basic computer skills. Good discipline and control is maintained by the tutors. Clear instructions are given about commitment to equal opportunities and diversity.

121. Resources are generally satisfactory. Good induction and jobsearch materials have recently been introduced. At one learning centre there is a staff shortage, but the provider is aware of this and is planning to recruit additional staff. The provider has also identified that more computers are required to provide better access for clients. Staff are appropriately qualified and experienced and there is ongoing training and development. Some staff have recently achieved qualifications in advice and guidance.

122. Induction is satisfactory. Many clients and learners attend a half-day induction

session at the learning centre or receive the information individually if they are unable to attend the group session. They are provided with clear information as to the content of their programme and other relevant information such as health and safety. The induction pack has recently been further developed and contains some good learning materials to improve their understanding of equality of opportunity. There is an additional induction in the workplace and at the subcontractors to ensure understanding of roles and responsibilities, attendance, health and safety issues and work activities. However, many learners and clients have poor recall of the content of the induction.

123. For some learners and clients there is poor planning and co-ordination of their programmes. This was also identified as a weakness at the previous inspection. Most individual learning plans are well completed, although the recording and updating of some plans is weak. Initial assessment of literacy and numeracy recorded on the individual learning plan and there is generally satisfactory support for learners' literacy and numeracy needs. However, initial assessment is not always used to plan learning. Additional support is not always sufficiently structured, recorded and measured to ensure effective progress. Some learning centres do not have staff qualified to teach literacy, numeracy and language. At these learning centres, clients and learners are visited more frequently and can record answers to knowledge questions on portable dictation machines. Although many clients have a successful work placement, providing varied and relevant work experience, for some clients it is not well planned and the work activity can be repetitive and insufficiently demanding. Employers are not always given sufficient information on clients' training programmes. Some are unsure of the length of their work placement and how they can best meet the clients' needs. Some employers are not involved in progress reviews. The reviews are inconsistently completed. Many are well detailed and provide a clear picture of the clients' programme and their progress. Others are poorly detailed, with insufficiently detailed target-setting and action-planning. At some learning centres, clients do not have good access to computers to support jobsearch activities and for work on their training programme. At some learning centres, planning and recording of jobsearch activities to meet individual need is not adequate.

Leadership and management

124. Staff work effectively as a team on the adult learning programmes. Internal communications are good within each learning centre. Staff share progress and problems relating to clients, both formally and informally. Staff are well qualified, trained and experienced and are encouraged to develop their skills both occupationally and as tutors. Learner files are well presented.

125. Pelcombe Training staff quality assure the subcontracted training provision for lift truck and LGV training. Staff regularly observe training and complete detailed records. However, the staff carrying out observations are not sufficiently occupationally competent to make accurate judgements. Managers carry out observations of the key learning processes. In addition Pelcombe Training carries out monitoring visits to subcontractors.

126. Insufficient progress has been made in tackling the weaknesses identified at the previous inspection. The strengths and weaknesses identified at inspection were similar to those found in the previous inspection. For example, there has not been enough increase in the achievement rates on work-based learning programmes. Employer involvement in the review process has improved at some learning centres but not at others. The induction process is now satisfactory. Planning of learning is still poor for some learners and clients.

127. All staff are involved in the self-assessment process. Each learning centre produces a self-assessment report that feeds into the national report. An action plan is produced nationally and each learning centre produces its own action plan. The current report identified many of the strengths and weaknesses found by inspectors.

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

Programmes inspected	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Other government-funded provision	72	3
Work-based learning for young people	26	3
New Deal 18-24	9	3

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

Strengths

- good on-the-job training
- good initial assessment for learners
- very good support

Weaknesses

- some slow progress
- insufficient resources
- no initial assessment of literacy, numeracy and language skills of learners on the employer training pilot programme

Achievement and standards

128. Learners on the employer training pilot programme collect a good standard of work in their portfolios. Portfolios are clearly organised and well presented and learners are able to monitor their own progress and cross-reference their evidence to the NVQ standards. Learners make good use of reflective accounts to relate their learning to practice. Some learners use pre-printed workbooks to complete the knowledge specification for the NVQ. However, these workbooks do not demonstrate the learners' experience of caring for real people and do not relate specifically to their own individual circumstances.

129. Some learners are making slow progress in their qualifications. On the Employer Training Pilot, some learners had not had enough assessor visits at the start of their programme and have needed extensions to their completion dates. At the previous inspection, learners did not understand the NVQ assessment process. Their specific learning needs were not being identified and supported. The assessor was initially unable to cope with the number of learners they were responsible for. Of those who started on the modern apprenticeship programme before 2004, most have made slow progress towards their key skills qualification and technical certificate. Until recently, key skills have been taught separately and towards the end of the learners' programme. Some learners have repeated work to cover each section of their framework. This was identified as a weakness at the previous inspection. Constructive improvements have been made in the provision of all aspects of the framework. Learners registered in 2004

are now using evidence and knowledge gained in key skills and the technical certificate for their NVQ. More recently, additional assessors have been recruited and effective progress is now being made. Achievement on all programmes, except early years, was low at the previous inspection. However, achievement has improved. Learners who have joined the programme since February this year have made satisfactory or better progress in all aspects of the framework.

130. Retention rates have improved on the foundation modern apprenticeship programme. Of the nine starts in 2002-03, five are still on programme, and of the nine who joined the programme in 2003-04, six are still in learning. The corresponding figures for the advanced programme are one start in 2002-03 who is still in learning and of the eight who started in 2003-04, all are still in learning. Of the learners on the employer training pilot programme, 59 per cent have been retained since the start of the programme. A small number have achieved and approximately 20 per cent are due to submit their portfolios for completion.

Quality of education and training

131. On-the-job training is good. Work placements are very good on the New Deal for young people voluntary sector option. Clients and learners develop good practical skills at work in care and early years settings. Workplace supervisors and managers provide good coaching and guidance and assessors give good individual tuition during assessment feedback and useful questioning, with clear explanations of terms used in care work and the NVQ standards. Many learners and clients receive in-house training at work including moving and handling, first aid, food hygiene certificates, child protection training, challenging behaviour training and health and safety. Learners demonstrate good practice with clients they are caring for. For modern apprentices, lesson plans are used to ensure that each learner receives the same content for each topic. There is good development of personal and social skills for New Deal clients and employer training pilot learners. Learners and clients gain confidence in their own abilities. Well-established care workers have become good practitioners and are beginning to relate their everyday caring skills to background knowledge of care work. New Deal clients develop work-related skills. This is demonstrated through their commitment to their work placement and their enjoyment in their work. Clients attend their work placement punctually, show consistent timekeeping and take responsibility for a range of essential tasks in early years work. There is an appropriate range of programmes to meet the needs of local employers and learners. The employer training pilot particularly meets the needs of the care sector.

132. Following the previous inspection, a good initial assessment process has been introduced for modern apprentices. Learners on these programmes complete an application form, that clearly records previous academic achievement and any vocational experience, and attend an interview. The findings at interview are clearly recorded. Comprehensive information on any social barriers, additional needs, preferred learning style and other indicators are used to place the learner with an appropriate employer. All learners complete a literacy and numeracy assessment that clearly identifies any

learning needs. A comprehensive skills analysis is completed based on their job description and is used to highlight areas where more training may be necessary. Initial assessment is used effectively to plan the training programme for each learner.

133. Very good support is given to learners and clients. Good support for learners was identified as a strength at the previous inspection and learners continue to be given additional support from employers and work-placement supervisors. Provider staff are fully committed to helping learners complete their learning programmes. All learners are provided with the mobile telephone numbers of their tutors. Employers, assessors and learners have excellent working relationships. Assessors make three six-weekly visits to the workplace for learners and more frequent visits for modern apprentices. Assessors discuss progress with learners, and employers fully understand the NVQ requirements and their roles in supporting learners. Learning facilitators provide additional support and if they are unable to help, refer learners to external support agencies. Some learners are given no time off from work to complete their portfolios of evidence or to complete set work.

134. Assessment is satisfactory. Staff are appropriately qualified as assessors or are working towards relevant qualifications. They give appropriate feedback of observations of learners at work. However, one assessor is not vocationally qualified but is developing care experience and is able to recognise transferable skills from her own discipline. This approach is supported by the external verifier as meeting awarding body standards.

135. There are insufficient physical and human resources. At the previous inspection, it was identified that staff had large workloads. The provider has recently recruited new assessors. This has rectified some of the workload problems. Pelcombe Training is required to submit learners' portfolios for the external verifier to examine before certification. Textbooks or learning materials are not routinely made available to learners. There is no lending library or video resource. Assessors work well to research learning materials and make them available to learners, but there is no established learning resource bank at the providers' premises. Most learners do not access off-the-job training at Pelcombe Training. Learners are required to obtain their own materials to support their knowledge and understanding of background issues.

136. Learners on the employer training pilot programme receive no initial assessment of their literacy, numeracy and language needs. There is no formal additional support provided when a need is identified. Learners have insufficiently detailed individual learning plans that are not updated and do not routinely record prior learning. For most learners there is no difference in completion dates or targets identified for individual units or parts of units. However, assessors approach individual learners according to their needs and will provide additional visits and support. However, this additional support is not recorded or formalised. For modern apprentices, needs are identified and support is given by the learning facilitator in the form of extra time for individual work. This can involve the learners rewriting their work. Although over 50 per cent of modern apprentices have specific learning needs, staff are not provided with appropriate training.

Leadership and management

137. The management of resources is insufficiently planned and provided for. There is a very small care team which has regular meetings to discuss targets for starts and completions, focusing on individual learner progress. These meetings are recorded appropriately and the minutes shared. Staff have access to staff development and training for care-related and broader issues such as key skills and equality of opportunity. All recently recruited staff received an appropriate induction into the organisation and are aware of the organisation's policies and procedures.

138. Equality of opportunity is satisfactory. Learners are aware of issues, their rights and responsibilities as well as the provider's complaints procedures. Equality of opportunity is covered during progress reviews and is recorded on contact sheets. Staff have attended in-house equality of opportunity training and understand it. Learners remember equality of opportunity in their induction. A new handbook for learners and employers makes reference to rights and responsibilities and includes a statement on the provider's equality of opportunity policy. The handbook is clear about employers' responsibilities. Pelcombe Training has recently been successful in recruiting male learners on its programmes, and they represent 9 per cent of current care learners.

139. Quality assurance arrangements are satisfactory. Internal verification procedures, policies and sampling plans are in place. Work-based assessors are involved in regular four to six-weekly assessor and internal verifier standardisation meetings that are recorded appropriately. Files are checked for content and the relevant forms are examined before completion. All paperwork is monitored. Some of the quality assurance arrangements are new and not all files contain all new paperwork.

Foundation programmes**Grade 4**

Programmes inspected	Number of learners	Contributory grade
New Deal 25+ and work-based learning for adults	250	4
Programme centres	204	3
New Deal 18-24	120	4

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

Strengths

- good pastoral support
- well-presented induction and jobsearch materials

Weaknesses

- low job outcomes for clients
- unsatisfactory teaching
- inadequate resources
- ineffective programmes to meet individual needs of BET clients
- insufficient literacy, numeracy and language guidance and support for staff

Achievement and standards

140. Job outcomes are low for clients. On the adult learning programmes for 2002-03, 20 per cent of clients gained jobs. On New Deal 18-24 for the same year, 27 per cent of clients gained jobs. For 2003-04 on New Deal 18-24, job outcomes are currently 24 per cent with 10 per cent still in learning. On New Deal 25+ for the same year, job outcomes are currently 14 per cent with 27 per cent still in learning. However, the proportion of clients gaining jobs is improving. For example, the proportion of New Deal 25+ clients gaining jobs in 1999-2000, 2000-01 and 2001-02, was 9 per cent, 13 per cent and 20 per cent, respectively. On New Deal 18-24 for 2000-01 and 2001-02, the proportion of clients gaining jobs rose from 13 per cent to 27 per cent, respectively. There is some improvement in job outcomes for Gateway to Work clients. For example, local figures show that in one learning centre 46 per cent of clients gain jobs. However, the average figure across the company for Gateway to Work is 23 per cent. Job outcomes for clients on programme centres are satisfactory at 45 per cent in 2002-03 and 35 per cent in 2003-04, with 26 per cent still in learning.

141. Retention rates are satisfactory, at 57 per cent for all adult learning programmes, 58 per cent for New Deal 18-24 and 43 per cent for programme centres. Retention rates are improving across all programmes. On programmes for young people, retention rates have increased from 50 per cent to 58 per cent over the past 12 months.

Quality of education and training

142. Pastoral support for clients is good. Many clients have personal and social barriers to learning and to entering employment. Tutors provide good support to help clients overcome personal issues and to develop their personal skills and self-confidence. Staff develop good working relationships with clients. Clients are able to adjust their attendance at training according to personal and domestic needs.

143. Induction and jobsearch materials are well produced. There is a comprehensive and standardised jobsearch pack for tutors and clients consisting of learner handbook, transparencies for overhead projectors, schemes of work and lesson plans covering a variety of mandatory topics such as curriculum vitae, letter writing and interview techniques. The materials are clear and good use is made of illustrations. There are good examples to support learners' understanding of equal opportunities. There is also a new learner handbook for clients with literacy and language needs.

144. Teaching is unsatisfactory. Of the 17 classes observed, 10 were satisfactory, one was good and six were unsatisfactory. Lessons are poorly planned and taught, with not enough use of a good range of teaching methods or sufficient involvement of clients in the learning activities. Clients' understanding is not monitored. Some sessions are not appropriate to learners' programmes. For example, one numeracy session was spent comparing metric and imperial systems of measurement and a whole morning was spent understanding the use of apostrophes. Tutors plan activities based on worksheet completion. Learners do not progress at an appropriate pace. Language is often not taught in the context of work or jobsearch. Tutors do not adequately organise classroom resources or the clients. There is poor use of discussion, group and teamwork or role-play. There was not enough information available on inspection to make a judgement about teaching on the Gateway to Work programme.

145. Resources are inadequate. In some learning centres rooms are too small for the numbers of clients. In other learning centres noise from other areas disrupts activities. In one learning centre there is no room available for private interviews. Tutors rotate the use of rooms to try and maximise use of space. Most learning centres are accessible to those with restricted mobility. There are insufficient resources on New Deal 18-24 and New Deal 25+ programmes. Pelcombe Training does not provide enough resources for teaching and learning. Some tutors provide all of their own materials and equipment. There is not enough monitoring of the resources. There is too much use of worksheets in literacy, numeracy and language classes. Learning materials are often not appropriate to clients' programmes and development needs. In some learning centres clients do not have good access to books, dictionaries and calculators. Clients on Gateway to Work programmes have access to good resources.

146. The programmes do not meet effectively the individual needs of BET clients. This was identified as a weakness at the previous inspection. These programmes do not enable clients to develop appropriate skills to gain jobs. There is insufficient focus on providing BET clients with work placements. For example, in one learning centre, only

one out of 18 clients is on a work placement. However, in two learning centres where new staff have been appointed to set up and monitor work placements, clients are well matched to the work and there is evidence of an increase in job outcomes. Most literacy, numeracy and language lessons are not based on clients' career aims. There is insufficient exchange of information about clients' learning needs between tutors, staff who visit clients in the workplace and workplace supervisors. Insufficient attention is given to individuals' literacy, numeracy, language needs. Most clients are given a basic skills assessment before they join the provider. Some learners with basic skills needs make slow progress. At one learning centre three learners with severe basic skills needs were doing the same work as the rest of the group. Learning is not structured to meet individual client needs. Clients do not have a programme of activity. Materials are not differentiated and clients with very mixed ability are often working together on the same activity. There is no identification of short-term targets on individual learning plans. Clients are unaware of what it is they are aiming to achieve. There is no recording of targets to tackle barriers to employment such as punctuality, personal hygiene or attendance.

147. There are not enough staff to meet the needs of individual clients, particularly in those learning centres where clients on various programmes work together. For example, at one learning centre there has been no jobsearch tutor while a vacancy was being filled and at another learning centre some cover has been arranged. In learning centres that have recently expanded, clients do not always get sufficient individual support.

148. There is insufficient access to ICT across all New Deal and programme centre programmes. For example, in one learning centre there are 10 computers of which only two are available for jobsearch for potentially 200 clients. Not enough computers are connected to the internet. Connection is through an external modem. In one learning centre there are different versions of word-processing software on different computers. Following client feedback at one learning centre, additional computers have been purchased.

Leadership and management

149. There is a regular programme of minuted meetings. However, some staff have difficulty in attending meetings due to staff shortages. Staff meet with staff from other centres to develop new materials such as the induction pack. Clients and staff have a satisfactory understanding of equal opportunities. Some learning centres have poor access for people with restricted mobility.

150. There is insufficient literacy, numeracy and language guidance and support for staff. Tutors do not know how to implement the new curriculum, use the skills for life materials, or design schemes of work and learning programmes. No member of staff is qualified to provide support for clients who have dyslexia. Staff do not know who to ask for professional support. There is not enough specialist knowledge and expertise within the organisation to provide support to all staff about recent developments and resources

on implementing the skills for life strategy. Other staff are not sufficiently aware of literacy, numeracy and language to support effectively their own clients. Some staff do not understand the differences between the curriculum and exam board requirements. Some tutors do not know what resources are available, such as websites, software and awarding body guidance. Some tutors have considerable expertise in teaching children but insufficient expertise to teach adults. A staff development programme has been put in place, but has so far had insufficient impact on teaching. Quality assurance procedures are not applied consistently across the learning centres.