

REINSPECTION REPORT

TNG Ltd Reinspection

28 May 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.

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TNG Ltd Reinspection

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REINSPECTION REPORT

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROVIDER

1. TNG Ltd (TNG) was recently known as The Training Network Group Limited. It is a large, privately owned training and consultancy organisation. The Training Network Group Limited was established in 1983 in North London and has since grown by developing a range of training and consultancy activities which are delivered to a wide range of public and private customers. During 2003, the company rebranded and restructured into five national business units: TNG Options, TNG Workskills, TNG Mentoring, TNG Business support and TNG Consulting. The first four of these business units contracts with the United Kingdom's (UK) government-funded sector. TNG offers a wide range of training programmes funded by the Learning and Skills Council and Jobcentre Plus. TNG Options delivers modern apprenticeships, Entry to Employment and employer training programmes. TNG Workskills delivers short job-focused training (SJFT), basic employability training, short intensive basic skills training, Gateway, Gateway to Work, Follow Through, full-time education and training, environment task force option, voluntary sector option, longer occupational training (LOT), intensive activity period for adults, and New Deal programmes.

2. TNG's aims are to get people into work, enhance the skills of the workforce, promote social inclusion, regenerate communities and encourage the development of lifelong learning while meeting the identified needs of clients.

3. The company's senior staff include the chief executive officer, the operations director, the finance director, director people and quality and director international and nine managers. TNG employs over 430 full-time members of staff and up to 20 associates. It has 42 sites in the UK and Europe.

SCOPE OF PROVISION

Retailing, customer service & transportation

4. There are 68 learners on programmes in retailing, customer service and transportation. Forty learners are on modern apprenticeship programmes in customer service. Nineteen of these learners are advanced modern apprentices and 21 are foundation modern apprentices. There is one learner following a national vocational qualification (NVQ) training programme in customer service at level 3. There are 14 New Deal 18-24 clients. Of these, nine are on retailing programmes and five are on customer service programmes. There are 13 clients on work-based learning for adults. Of these, six are New Deal 25+ clients, of whom, three are on lift truck programmes, two are on heavy goods vehicle (HGV) programmes and one is on a customer service programme. Two clients are on LOT programmes in customer service and one client is on a LOT programme in retailing. Four clients are on SJFT in lift truck programmes.

5. Retailing, customer service and transportation learners are based at 10 of the

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company's regional training centres. NVQ and modern apprenticeship learners are recruited through employers. They receive their induction in the workplace, are trained on the job and are assessed in their workplaces by TNG's assessors. Clients on all other programmes are referred to TNG by Connexions and Jobcentre Plus. They receive an induction and training at TNG's training centres and take part in work placements.

ABOUT THE REINSPECTION

Number of inspectors	4
Number of inspection days	12
Number of learner interviews	20
Number of staff interviews	14
Number of employer interviews	4
Number of subcontractor interviews	1
Number of locations/sites/learning centres visited	5
Number of visits	5

OVERALL JUDGEMENT

6. At the previous inspection, TNG's leadership and management and business administration training were judged to be good. Equality of opportunity, quality assurance, hospitality, health and social care and foundation programmes were judged to be satisfactory. Retailing, customer service and transportation was judged to be unsatisfactory. At the end of the reinspection process, training in retailing, customer service and transportation was judged to be satisfactory.

GRADES

Grades awarded at previous inspection

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

Business administration, management & professional	2
Contributory grades:	
New Deal 25+ and work-based learning for adults	2
New Deal 18-24	2
Work-based learning for young people	3

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

Hospitality, sport, leisure & travel	3
Contributory grades:	
New Deal 18-24	3

Health, social care & public services	3
Contributory grades:	
Work-based learning for young people	3
New Deal 25+ and work-based learning for adults	3
New Deal 18-24	3

Foundation programmes	3
Contributory grades:	
New Deal 25+ and work-based learning for adults	3
Programme centres	3
New Deal 18-24	3
Life Skills	2

Grades awarded at reinspection

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

Retailing, customer service & transportation	3
Contributory grades:	
Work-based learning for young people	3
New Deal 18-24	3
Work-based learning for adults	2

AREAS OF LEARNING

Retailing, customer service & transportation

Grade 3

Programmes inspected	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Work-based learning for young people	41	3
New Deal 18-24	14	3
Work-based learning for adults	13	2

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

Strengths

- good progression in the workplace for learners
- good lift truck training
- good individual coaching for Jobcentre Plus clients
- good support for Jobcentre Plus clients

Weaknesses

- low achievement of job outcomes on Jobcentre Plus programmes
- insufficient planning, co-ordination and recording of training for modern apprentices
- insufficient subcontractor promotion of equality of opportunity

Achievement and standards

7. Learners make good progress in the workplace. Work placements are good and help learners gain confidence and develop good work skills. Most employers are supportive of learners' development needs. Learners on modern apprenticeship programmes are set clear targets that give them good opportunities to achieve their qualifications. Several have gained promotion or taken on additional responsibilities during the training programme and some have progressed on to additional and more advanced qualifications. There is effective monitoring of learners' progress. Some learners are achieving their targets well in advance of the target completion date.

8. Seven per cent of advanced modern apprentices completed the framework in 2000-01 and 4 per cent of learners are still in learning. Twelve per cent of advanced modern apprentices completed the framework in 2001-02, 3 per cent have completed in 2002-03 and 22 per cent have completed from 2003-04. Twenty-nine per cent of advanced modern apprentices from 2002-03 and 56 per cent from 2003-04 are still in learning. Nine per cent of foundation modern apprentices completed the framework in 2000-01, 8 per cent completed it in 2001-02 and 6 per cent completed it in 2002-03. Fifteen per cent of foundation modern apprentices from 2002-03 and 82 per cent from 2003-04 are still in learning. A few modern apprentices are making slow progress. However, TNG

has introduced additional support for these learners and over half are near to completion. Overall, learners are making satisfactory progress towards completion of the modern apprenticeship framework. At the previous inspection, learners were making slow progress towards completion of the modern apprenticeship framework.

9. There is poor achievement of job outcomes on Jobcentre Plus programmes. Over the past three years, the proportion of New Deal 18-24 clients gaining employment has been no higher than 31 per cent. For Jobcentre Plus clients on adult programmes there has been steady and continuous improvement over the past three years. Twenty-four per cent of clients gained jobs in 2001-02, 28 per cent gained jobs in 2002-03 and 35 per cent have already gained jobs in 2003-04. Twelve per cent of clients who started the programme in 2003-04 are still in learning.

Quality of education and training

10. Lift truck training is good. On starting training, all clients receive a comprehensive set of handouts on the safe operation of lift trucks and the relevant safety legislation. Tutors demonstrate very good coaching skills, which are motivational and technically challenging. Tutors give clients clear instructions. They point out any errors or faults clients make, and constructively recommend techniques to avoid or correct them. Clients receive praise for good performance, at frequent intervals during learning sessions. Detailed explanation and discussion of key points takes place with clients, to reinforce their knowledge and understanding. Clients demonstrate a good level of operating skill in practice sessions. Resources for theory training are good. Poster displays, a range of videos and other visual aids used in the classroom, highlight safe and good lift truck practice.

11. There is good individual coaching for Jobcentre Plus clients. Clients attend their training centre every week or every two weeks for off-the-job training. Learning sessions are well planned, and are supported by detailed sessions plans, which include timescales and the resources required. Comprehensive handouts are used during each session, with key learning topics set out as bullet points. These points are used as a basis for learning exercises and for discussions of relevant aspects of each subject with their training adviser. Clients are involved and motivated during these discussions, and demonstrate good understanding and attainment. Learners recognise their improved skills in seeking employment and increasing confidence. Recording of jobsearch activities is thorough and provides good reference material for further skills development. Training advisers also demonstrate very good knowledge and understanding of the occupational areas. There is insufficient formal training for learners on the modern apprenticeship training programmes. They do not participate in additional training or work towards achieving enhancements to the frameworks. However, there is effective coaching by employers and TNG's assessors to develop learners' customer service skills.

12. Support for clients on Jobcentre Plus programmes is good. The pattern of visits made by TNG's staff is responsive to clients' needs. Clients are motivated by the support and encouragement they receive from training advisers in the form of help, advice and

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guidance with aspects of their programmes. Jobcentre Plus clients comment positively on their trainers. The high level of client support extends to the subcontracted lift truck training. The company's mentoring service is well promoted at induction and is successfully used by some learners. An appropriate selection of work placements is available to learners. Work-placement providers are supportive and develop learners' skills. Work-placement providers' staff have good communication links with TNG. They can phone with any queries as they arise and can rely on TNG's staff to resolve problems. Individual support is given for learners' literacy and numeracy as it is needed. Some support is provided by a specialist tutor and additional coaching is provided by other staff at the training centres. Continuing support is given to clients who have left their programme without achieving all the learning goals, and then return at a later stage to continue with their training. TNG's staff persistently provide training and learning support to clients who leave their training programme and return on a number of occasions, to improve their motivation. Clients also receive good support from work-placement providers. They receive dedicated on-the-job training and are assisted in carrying out tasks and producing evidence for relevant NVQ units.

13. Support for modern apprentices is satisfactory. Assessors visit learners every month and provide effective support between visits by e-mail and through telephone contact. Progress reviews are satisfactory. At the previous inspection, weaknesses were identified around target-setting and individual learning plans. Progress reviews now sufficiently monitor progress in the qualification as well as in the workplace. Although employers are not normally involved in the progress review, they do meet the reviewer to contribute their views and discuss the topics of the progress review. Individual learning plans are regularly monitored and updated. Progress review report forms are used to set short-term targets at each assessor visit. Induction for all learners is satisfactory.

14. Resources are satisfactory. Good resources are available for jobsearch and other training, although learners sometimes have to wait to gain access to computer work stations. Work placements are good. TNG's premises provide satisfactory learning environments. Rooms are clean, light and airy. Schemes of work, lesson plans, assignments and handouts are adequate for the purpose. TNG is currently developing lesson plans and resources to support the introduction of the technical certificate. The range of courses and qualifications is appropriate to learners' needs.

15. Assessment practice is satisfactory. There is sufficient evidence and assessment for the NVQ and key skills criteria. An electronic portfolio system is in place for all modern apprentices. A wide variety of evidence and assessment methods is used. There are examples of good practice, with audio and video equipment used to record assessment. Learners appreciate the use of laptop computers by assessors to record evidence and assessment which removes the need for large paper-based portfolios. Learners' portfolios are constructed logically and evidence is easy to find. Learners' skill development is accurately recorded during progress reviews. Learners' records are thoroughly detailed on individual learning plans, progress review report forms and discussion notes. Learners' files are standardised and are easy to audit. The content of the files clearly illustrates the diversity of learners.

Leadership and management

16. There is insufficient planning, co-ordination and recording of training for modern apprentices. Initial assessment identifies learners' literacy and numeracy and vocational training and support needs, but this information is not used as a basis for an individual action plan. There are no meetings to monitor that learners' training and support needs are met. Some individual learning plans state that numeracy workshops will be provided but learners do not subsequently attend these. Where a skills scan identifies if a learner's job does not meet some of the NVO requirements, and the employer is not sufficiently involved in this process, there is no action plan to ensure the job will provide opportunities to meet all the NVO criteria. There is insufficient formal, structured, training from either the employer or TNG. There is insufficient co-ordination between employers and TNG to ensure learners' training needs are met. A learner requesting some particular work-related training was informed that the employer could not currently provide this, and TNG did not offer to fill this gap in training. There is insufficient key skills training or preparation for key skills exams. The provision of support is often delayed. Learners often fail tests at their first attempt. In one workplace, learners failed tests on two occasions before a support workshop was arranged. All learners passed on their third attempt. Learning support materials are incomplete. TNG now has the key skills builder learning resource available to identify and support learners' needs. Learners are not routinely provided with information to improve their skills and knowledge, but are sometimes directed to the internet to research information.

17. Learners' awareness of equal opportunities is satisfactory. Learners are asked at each progress review visit if they are treated fairly. There is some additional discussion of equal opportunities subjects to ensure learners' understanding of the issues. The recording of this, however, is not sufficiently detailed. Subcontractors do not promote equality of opportunity sufficiently. One subcontractor demonstrated a limited awareness of equality and diversity, particularly in relation to bullying and harassment. TNG does not carry out enough monitoring of the implementation of subcontractors' equal opportunities policies. TNG collects data on diversity from all clients. This data is analysed centrally although the subcontractor does not understand the purpose of this.

18. Staff have appropriate qualifications and occupational experience. They receive appropriate continuous professional development. Staff also attend in-house training in aspects such as health and safety and equality of opportunity. Learners' views are sought at progress reviews. Questionnaires are also used and these are currently being further developed as it was identified that not all learners were being given the opportunity to complete them. A questionnaire for employers is also being developed.

19. Internal verification was identified as a weakness at the previous inspection but it is now satisfactory. There is sufficient sampling of learners' portfolios and assessors. Records are kept to monitor assessors and units are sampled, to ensure adequate verification over time. Assessors and verifiers meet every month to standardise practice. However, some internal verification practice is ineffective. For example, the assessor observation documents provide insufficient space for feedback to assessors. Some

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assessors are unclear about the standardisation process used by TNG. Assessors do not always sign internal verifier records to confirm receipt. The same monitoring form is used to observe assessors and interview candidates. Although action points are followed up, some of the verification comments are insufficiently detailed to be used constructively for improvement.