

INSPECTION REPORT

Cambridge City Council Employment Foundation Scheme

08 January 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 and Jobcentre Plus programmes. The same scale is used to describe the quality of leadership and management, which includes quality assurance and equality of opportunity. The descriptors for the five grades are:

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

The two grading scales relate to each other as follows:

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

Adult Learning Inspectorate

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

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

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

Overall judgement

Where the overall judgement is that the provision is adequate, only those aspects of the provision which are less than satisfactory will be reinspected.

Provision will normally be deemed to be inadequate where:

- more than one third of published grades for occupational/curriculum areas, **or**
- leadership and management are judged to be less than satisfactory.

This provision will be subject to a full reinspection.

The final decision as to whether the provision is inadequate rests with the Chief Inspector of Adult Learning. A statement as to whether the provision is adequate or not is included in the summary section of the inspection report.

INSPECTION REPORT

Cambridge City Council Employment Foundation Scheme

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INSPECTION REPORT

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROVIDER

1. Cambridge City Council Employment Foundation Scheme (EFS) was first established in 1983 with three trainers and an average of 10 learners each year. EFS now has a staff of 22, including a manager, 13 training staff and a team of nine administration and contracts management staff. EFS has a management board of two chief officers, but this is currently changing to include wider representation from stakeholders internally and externally. During 2002-03, the provider has gone through significant organisational change with loss of staff and some redundancies. A new EFS manager was appointed in January 2003 and the organisation is now in a period of review, reorganisation and development.

2. EFS has a contract with Cambridgeshire Learning and Skills Council (LSC) to deliver Entry into Employment (E2E) training, and is the largest provider of Jobcentre Plus programmes for the city of Cambridge. The areas of learning inspected were business administration, information and communications technology (ICT) and foundation programmes. Training is subcontracted to four specialist training providers.

3. Cambridgeshire is one of the fastest growing counties in England. The Office of National Statistics for population growth indicate a projected 12 per cent growth in the 15 years from 2001. The area is predominately rural; the main population centres are the cities of Peterborough and Cambridge. The presence of Cambridge University has influenced patterns of commercial development within the city. Many firms are at the leading edge of technological, medical and telecommunications research. Traditional industries are engineering and electronics, and more recently there has been rapid growth in warehousing and distribution. The manufacturing sector is in decline and services are the most dominant sector in the city.

4. In 2003, the proportion of school leavers achieving five or more general certificates of secondary education at grade C or above, was 54.7 per cent, compared with a national average of 52.9 per cent. There are, however, significant variations across Cambridgeshire, and Basic Skills Agency data show that over 30 per cent of the working age population have numeracy problems, with 13 per cent having literacy problems. In August 2003, 27 per cent of 18-24 year olds were unemployed in Cambridgeshire, compared with a national average of 28.3 per cent. At the time of the 2001 census, Cambridgeshire had a minority ethnic population of 4.1 per cent, compared with a regional average of 4.9 per cent and a national average of 9.1 per cent.

SCOPE OF PROVISION

Business administration, management & professional

5. There are 64 clients working towards a range of qualifications, mainly in information

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technology (IT) at various levels. The training is all carried out by one subcontractor. Clients follow introductory and intermediate qualifications in office-related computer literacy and IT. They take part in a series of jobsearch sessions and workshops alongside clients from other programmes. There is a range of work-placement opportunities with local public and private organisations which is co-ordinated by a work-placement officer. Clients are referred for training from the programme centre.

Information & communications technology

6. There are 29 clients in subcontracted ICT training. They work towards nationally recognised qualifications for which they are assessed online or externally. There is also training in creative computing programmes. Jobsearch support and guidance are available on demand at EFS's centre. Clients are referred by local jobcentres, and some arrive by personal recommendation. They have an initial interview and assessment, and their progress is reviewed monthly.

Foundation programmes

7. There are 82 learners and clients on foundation programmes, 63 of them at the programme centre. This is provided by a subcontractor in a dedicated facility which is jointly manned by staff from the subcontractor and EFS. Programme centre clients are referred by Jobcentre Plus. Following individual assessment of their needs, a programme of individual support is arranged to help them to gain employment. Clients are required to attend for at least four hours each week. This time may be spent in workshops, on individual meetings with the support staff, or in using the jobsearch facilities.

8. Eight learners are following the E2E prevocational programme. This centres on personal and social development and the acquisition of vocational skills such as amenity horticulture, painting and decorating, carpentry and joinery, or IT. Most of these learners are referred by Connexions. Following a period of detailed initial assessment to identify their learning needs, learners follow individualised programmes which include the development of literacy and numeracy skills at basic or intermediate level. Learners have the opportunity to gain vocational qualifications, certificates in literacy and numeracy, and a work preparation certificate. Work experience is arranged for those who request it. Attendance is negotiated with the learner and the hours are increased as the learner becomes more able to cope with the demands of the course.

9. There are four clients on work-based learning for adults and three on Life Skills. Four young people are on the full-time education and training option of New Deal 18-24, and attend the training centre for a programme of literacy, numeracy and IT.

10. All learners and clients are given an induction. They have progress reviews weekly during their first four weeks and monthly thereafter. Additional reviews are held as necessary. Personal advisers from Connexions or Jobcentre Plus often attend the progress reviews of full-time learners and clients.

ABOUT THE INSPECTION

Number of inspectors	5
Number of inspection days	20
Number of learner interviews	29
Number of staff interviews	39
Number of employer interviews	6
Number of subcontractor interviews	11
Number of locations/sites/learning centres visited	6
Number of partner/external agency interviews	6

OVERALL JUDGEMENT

11. The quality of provision is not adequate to meet the reasonable needs of those receiving it. More specifically, EFS's leadership and management are unsatisfactory. Its approach to equality of opportunity is satisfactory but its quality assurance is unsatisfactory. The quality of work-based learning is satisfactory in business administration, and unsatisfactory in ICT. EFS's foundation programmes are satisfactory or better.

GRADES

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

Business administration, management & professional	3
Contributory grades:	
Work-based learning for adults	3
New Deal 18-24	None

Information & communications technology	4
Contributory grades:	
Work-based learning for adults	4
New Deal 18-24	None

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Foundation programmes	3
Contributory grades:	
Programme centres	3
Entry to Employment	2
New Deal 18-24	None
Work-based learning for adults	None
Life Skills	None

KEY FINDINGS

Achievement and standards

12. In business administration, the retention rate is satisfactory but the achievement rate is unsatisfactory. The rate of progression into employment or further training is poor, but the trend has improved in 2003-04.

13. The overall retention rate for ICT programmes is satisfactory. Thirty-one per cent of clients achieved their qualifications in 2002-03. **Work experience is not a feature of the ICT programmes and there has been a poor rate of progression into jobs or further training.** In 2003-04, however, the progression rate is improving, with 19 per cent of clients in employment and 70 per cent still in learning.

14. The retention rate on foundation programmes is satisfactory. In 2002-03 only 12 per cent of learners gained employment. However, in 2003-04, 40 per cent of programme centre clients have so far gained employment and a further 54 per cent are still on the programme. These figures are good for this stage in the programme, and a great improvement over the previous year.

15. In August 2003, the Life Skills programme was replaced by E2E, but no learners have yet completed this programme. Life Skills, Route to Employment and the other foundation programmes with few learners, 49 per cent of learners achieved their planned qualifications in 2002-03. The overall achievement rate on foundation programmes is satisfactory.

16. Clients are rewarded for good attendance by in-house certification. They are encouraged to participate in the varied range of additional activities provided which develop social and personal skills.

Quality of education and training

Grades awarded to learning sessions

	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Total
Business administration, management & professional	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	2
Foundation programmes	0	2	3	3	0	0	0	8
Total	0	2	5	3	0	0	0	10

17. **There is good development of clients' personal skills with the support of tutors and specialist staff.** Some clients have no prior experience of computers, and their confidence is boosted immediately through the achievement of short-term targets. Clients work towards their own individual goals at their own pace, and many make rapid and significant progress which increases their self-esteem and motivation.

18. **Clients on business programmes make good progress.** A well-co-ordinated team of tutors monitors clients' progress and attendance, as well as delivering good training. Clients work their way through a structured series of modules and qualifications in business-related software. They gain nationally recognised certification, from introductory to higher levels.

19. **Resources are good** on business programmes. All the computers are new and networked. The equipment and software are good, as are the learning materials. Teaching is good and the staff are competent and sufficiently qualified. Training is delivered in a suite of rooms dedicated to specific levels of training. Tutors are always available and in attendance.

20. Induction and initial assessment of clients' literacy and numeracy skills is satisfactory. Clients are inducted at the programme centre before being referred to business administration and ICT programmes. Once clients start on their programmes, they receive a further induction from their tutors.

21. **Although learners develop good business-related computer skills there is insufficient opportunity for them to develop administrative skills** during the programmes. Computer assignments are not used to develop learners' knowledge and understanding of other vital office skills.

22. **There is good participation in training by disadvantaged clients.** The ICT subcontractor has good links with local churches, ethnic groups and organisations for the homeless. EFS play an active part in a local consortium of these agencies which promotes the programmes to clients disadvantaged by illness, redundancy and homelessness.

23. Resources for ICT clients are satisfactory. Training is delivered by a competent team of full- and part-time tutors with specialist knowledge and expertise. Programmes are run

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in open-plan accommodation with separate areas dedicated to the different programmes. There is a mixture of equipment but most is adequate for the software packages it is used for.

24. Training and learning in ICT are satisfactory. Teaching is informal and provided individually. Clients work independently and in groups, developing research and evaluative skills. Attendance hours are flexible and there is a lift for access.

25. Initial assessment and induction are satisfactory for clients on ICT programmes. Some clients receive an initial induction and assessment of their literacy and numeracy skills at the programme centre before being referred to these programmes. Others come direct to the subcontractor who refers them to the programme centre for assessment.

26. Progress reviews are satisfactory, although some targets set are not sufficiently detailed, and there is little checking and reinforcement of clients' understanding of equality of opportunity.

27. **There is no accreditation available for some ICT learners.** The subcontractor is seeking external approval to provide certification but this has been a long process. Some clients have already completed their programme and left with no certification of any kind. Their work has been retained by the subcontractor to seek certification as soon as this becomes possible.

28. **The management of the ICT subcontractor is unsatisfactory.** The subcontracted organisation has little experience of operating government-funded provision and relies heavily on advice, guidance and support from EFS and Jobcentre Plus personnel.

29. **Training and learning is good on foundation programmes.** Programmes are individualised. Group sessions are well planned and delivered. Learners are enthusiastic and participate confidently in discussions and practical activities. Tutors are sensitive to learners' needs.

30. **There is significant development of foundation learners' literacy and numeracy skills.** E2E, full-time education and training and basic employability training (BET) learners have a comprehensive initial assessment using a good range of assessment tools. Learners in subcontracted provision also have access to literacy and numeracy assessment and support. Each learner is allocated a personal trainer who supports them throughout their programme. There is good integration of numeracy and literacy with vocational programmes.

31. **EFS staff offer learners strong individual support which significantly improves their confidence and ability to cope.** Staff are friendly and approachable and have counselling or mentoring qualifications. The good links with external support agencies provide learners ready access to counselling on drugs, debt and homelessness. Learners receive good careers guidance and advice throughout the programme.

32. **Resources are good for foundation learners.** All clients and learners have access to

up-to-date computer equipment and software. Jobsearch facilities are comprehensive and are open to clients from all areas of learning. There are specialist advisers who are always available to assist learners. Learning resources are particularly good in horticulture, where learners have a real working environment with access to well-equipped outbuildings and commercial glasshouses, and grow plants for transfer to public amenity spaces.

33. There is insufficient monitoring of training on foundation programmes. Assessment and internal verification practices are weak on some programmes. The weaknesses in assessment practice have not all been identified by the internal verification process.

34. The review process is weak. Reviews of learners' progress do not occur frequently enough. There are several different versions of the review documents.

35. There are insufficient opportunities for work experience, particularly on E2E programmes. There are delays in obtaining work placements and some learners reported feeling disadvantaged by this. Work experience is not always linked effectively with the rest of the learners' programme.

Leadership and management

36. EFS has thorough procedures for the monitoring and dissemination of health and safety practices. A working party meets regularly and includes a learner from each department. Learners' views are represented and actions and issues reported back to them. Regular health and safety checks and audits are carried out on the main site and in the training departments. Risk assessments are carried out when appropriate. All work-placement providers are visited before learners join them and health and safety checks are carried out and recorded.

37. EFS has good links with local agencies to promote equality of access to training. Clients make significant progress and are enabled to achieve their potential through a range of developmental learning opportunities. EFS has effective networks for referral, job progression and personal support with a very wide range of local agencies. These include a centre for the homeless and a local training consortium which supports the unemployed and disadvantaged in Cambridge. All EFS's subcontractors are active members of the consortium.

38. EFS has a well-structured and inclusive approach to the improvement of equality and diversity in the training programme. All clients, staff and subcontractors have been consulted and are involved in improvements. The equality and diversity working group has made significant progress in implementing new ideas. Actions identified by the working group are developed and used in marketing and recruitment.

39. Significant steps have been taken to improve the training provision at EFS. Managers and staff recognised that there were serious problems with the provision and acted to resolve them. The organisation has been restructured. Internal and external communications have greatly improved. The latest business plan sets clear goals and

challenging targets.

40. Resources are satisfactory. EFS and its subcontractor have very recently developed a joint resource for programme centre clients. **There is a good range of networked computers and jobsearch resources in the programme centre.** Access for clients with limited mobility is satisfactory, and there is a range of adapted equipment available.

41. Staff training and development is satisfactory. EFS staff participate in Cambridge City Council's annual staff appraisal system. Staff development and training are available through the council's corporate training and arise from identified skills gaps. Equality and diversity training has recently been organised for all staff as part of the new equality and diversity implementation plan.

42. Provision for literacy and numeracy is satisfactory. A range of diagnostic tools is used for assessing the literacy and numeracy needs of learners. EFS's skills for life department provides assessment and/or support. Individual learning plans record clients' assessed needs.

43. The complaints and grievance procedures are satisfactory. EFS follows the council's complaints and grievance procedures. The training manager deals with all complaints. EFS has received a number of complaints over the past year and these have been resolved and dealt with promptly.

44. The self-assessment process is satisfactory. The report included some of the strengths and weaknesses identified by inspectors. The senior members of staff discussed and developed the self-assessment report. Learners and subcontractors were not involved in this process.

45. **There are no formal contractual arrangements with subcontractors.** New contracts are being scrutinised by the council's legal department but have not yet been implemented. Communication with some subcontractors has been weak but has improved over the past few months. There is no check that subcontractors have an equal opportunities policy or that they are promoting it to learners.

46. **The management information system is not being used effectively.** Data are not used for action-planning, or to set challenging targets for improvement. Information on equality of opportunity is recorded on a separate database but not analysed.

47. **There is insufficient reinforcement of clients' understanding of equality and diversity.** Learners in some areas of learning do not have a broad understanding of equality and diversity and the subject is not systematically reinforced at the progress reviews or through training, learning materials and assessments.

48. **There is poor quality assurance of training.** There are procedures for the quality assurance of the subcontracted training but these are not used and staff are unaware of them. **Where there is good practice, it is not being shared. Few formal teaching observations take place.**

49. Some feedback has been collected from learners but it has not been analysed or used to effect changes. Formal feedback is not collected regularly from staff and subcontractors.

The following strengths and weaknesses were identified during this inspection:

Leadership and management

Strengths

- good health and safety arrangements and procedures
- good links with agencies to widen participation
- well-structured approach to the promotion of equality and diversity
- significant steps taken to improve provision

Weaknesses

- inadequate management of subcontractors
- inadequate use of management information
- insufficient reinforcement of learners' understanding of equality and diversity
- poor quality assurance of training
- insufficient formal feedback

Business administration, management & professional

Strengths

- good development of learners' personal skills
- good progression within the programme
- good resources

Weaknesses

- insufficient opportunity for learners to develop administrative skills
- poor rate of progression into jobs

Information & communications technology

Strengths

- good access to training for disadvantaged clients

Weaknesses

- poor rate of progress into jobs
- no accreditation for some clients
- poor management of subcontracted provision

Foundation programmes

Strengths

- good training and learning
- significant development of literacy and numeracy skills
- strong individual support
- good resources

Weaknesses

- insufficient monitoring of training
- weak review process
- insufficient opportunities for work experience

WHAT LEARNERS LIKE ABOUT CAMBRIDGE CITY COUNCIL EMPLOYMENT FOUNDATION SCHEME:

- 'the tutors have time for you'
- 'no matter how many times you ask, the staff always explain - it's no trouble'
- 'it's like one big family'
- 'the staff don't make you feel like a loser'
- 'the more you want to learn, the more they help you'
- 'it's the best thing I've ever done'
- 'I'm so proud of myself - and so is my son'
- the good teaching
- the helpful, supportive and friendly staff

WHAT LEARNERS THINK CAMBRIDGE CITY COUNCIL EMPLOYMENT FOUNDATION SCHEME COULD IMPROVE:

- 'I would like a choice of who to work with'
- the communications between different agencies
- the level of control when some clients are disruptive
- the decoration of the rooms
- the amount of access to colour printing
- the reference guides - some are out of date
- more celebration and information when learners get employment

**KEY CHALLENGES FOR CAMBRIDGE CITY COUNCIL
EMPLOYMENT FOUNDATION SCHEME:**

- improve quality assurance procedures
- introduce accreditation for all programmes
- increase the proportion of learners progressing into jobs
- make better use of data for setting targets and planning
- share good practice in equal opportunities and quality assurance

DETAILED INSPECTION FINDINGS

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Grade 4

The following strengths and weaknesses were identified during this inspection:

Strengths

- good health and safety arrangements and procedures
- good links with agencies to widen participation
- well-structured approach to the promotion of equality and diversity
- significant steps taken to improve provision

Weaknesses

- inadequate management of subcontractors
- inadequate use of management information
- insufficient reinforcement of learners' understanding of equality and diversity
- poor quality assurance of training
- insufficient formal feedback

50. There are thorough procedures for monitoring and disseminating health and safety practices. A working party meets regularly and includes a client from each department. Clients' and learners' views are gathered and actions and issues reported back to them. Regular health and safety checks and audits are carried out on the main site and in all the training departments. Computer work station risk assessments are carried out when appropriate. All work placements are visited before clients start their work experience, and a health and safety check is carried out. Health and safety agreements are negotiated with all work-placement providers. All procedures are recorded well. There is a dedicated member of staff who co-ordinates health and safety who is well qualified and experienced.

51. Business planning is satisfactory. The latest business plan, for 2003-06, contains clear goals with related objectives. Many of these include challenging targets, for example, 'to increase achievement rates by 50 per cent in response to LSC learning targets'. Senior staff were involved in commenting on the draft business plan during an away day training session.

52. Resources are satisfactory. EFS and a subcontractor have very recently developed a joint programme centre and have worked together to provide the resources needed. Training rooms are suitable for teaching purposes and the skills for life department has good resources for literacy and numeracy teaching. Most staff are appropriately qualified. The remainder are working towards relevant qualifications.

53. Staff development and training are satisfactory. EFS staff participate in Cambridge City Council's annual staff appraisal system. Staff development and training are available

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through the council's corporate training programme or through in-house and external training. EFS concentrates on identifying skills gaps and developing staff accordingly. There has been some recent equality and diversity training organised for all staff as part of the new equality and diversity implementation plan

54. The provision for the identification and support of learners' literacy, numeracy and language needs is satisfactory. All learners have their literacy, numeracy and language skills assessed and, where needs are identified, appropriate support is provided. A range of diagnostic tools is used for assessing learners' literacy and numeracy needs. Subcontractors refer learners to EFS's skills for life department if they need assessment and/or support. Individual learning plans include the results of the literacy and numeracy assessments. All staff hold or are working towards qualifications in the teaching of literacy and numeracy.

55. The management of the four subcontractors is inadequate. EFS does not have formal contractual arrangements with the subcontractors. Contracts have been drawn up and are being checked by the council's legal department but have not yet been implemented. Communication with subcontractors has been weak. However, over the past few months this has shown a marked improvement. Subcontractors' equality of opportunity arrangements are not monitored. There is no check that each subcontractor has an equal opportunities policy or that it is promoting it to learners.

56. EFS has a computerised management information system, but it is inadequately used. The management information system is not used to produce sufficient data but those data that are produced are not used to set challenging targets or for action-planning. Information on equality of opportunity is recorded on a separate database. The data are not used to evaluate trends in the uptake of training by gender, disability or ethnic origin, or to set targets for recruitment. The system has been used for a year to record information on E2E learners, but not on Jobcentre Plus clients. EFS has recently held meetings with subcontractors which have resulted in a negotiated information strategy and action plan. The proposed new system is scheduled to be in place by April 2004 and will concentrate on recruitment, retention and achievement rates.

Equality of opportunity

Contributory grade 3

57. EFS has good links with local agencies to promote equality of access to training opportunities. Clients are enabled to achieve their potential through a range of developmental learning opportunities and key network links. EFS has effective networks for referral, job progression and personal support with a very wide range of agencies. These include a centre for the homeless and a local training consortium which supports unemployed and disadvantaged people in Cambridge. All EFS's subcontractors are active members of the consortium. This provides a productive opportunity to network and share ideas and information; EFS contracts with a local centre for the homeless to deliver its New Deal mentoring programme. Good opportunities are being offered to this disadvantaged group through this partnership. Clients are mentored to carry out voluntary work and skills training, with the prospect of progressing to work at the centre, in its car wash, food bank, and catalogue or bike projects. Clients also have the

opportunity to take up further training with EFS. One homeless client interviewed by inspectors was completing his portfolio for a literacy qualification and had plans to gain further qualifications. The mentoring service is open to all learners and clients.

58. EFS has a well-structured and inclusive approach to the improvement of equality and diversity in the training programme. All clients, staff and subcontractors have been consulted and are involved in improvements. Significant progress has been made in implementing new ideas through the equality and diversity working group. The equality and diversity policy and implementation plan covers all aspects of training provision and is managed well by the working group. Positive collaboration with subcontractors has enabled EFS to collect detailed information on learners, which it uses in marketing and recruitment. EFS has carried out a review of clients', staff's and subcontractors' understanding, skills, knowledge, and existing practice. The working group has used the results to create key priorities and areas for development. One is to increase the priority of equality and diversity in the training programmes. The equality and diversity policy requires all staff to undergo corporate training on equal opportunities and to identify personal development needs through the appraisal system. All staff had recent corporate training on equality and diversity. This led to improvements to learners' inductions and reviews. Learners are being asked for their views on these.

59. Most learners do not have a broad understanding of equality and diversity. Their understanding is not systematically reinforced during the review process or through training, learning materials and assessments. Programmes run by the skills for life department are an exception to this. Equality and diversity training is part of these programmes and they include awareness raising workshops and projects. However, this good practice is not shared with staff running other programmes. All learners are given some diversity training at induction, but many have little recollection of their rights or of the appropriate procedures for particular policies. Progress reviews are used to monitor learners' problems with equal opportunities, but the questioning is superficial. A number of new initiatives are in progress, and awareness has been raised at all levels, but it is too soon to judge the impact of these changes on clients.

60. EFS uses Cambridge City Council's complaints and grievance procedures, which are satisfactory. The training manager deals with all complaints, logging them in an incident file along with statements from witnesses. EFS has received several complaints over the past year, all of which have been resolved and dealt with promptly.

61. All staff follow Cambridge City Council's corporate induction to equality of opportunity, which is satisfactory. This includes awareness of the policy and how to implement it, legislation and the legal responsibilities of employees, individual responsibility and complaints and harassment. Equality and diversity training has recently been organised for all staff as part of the new equality and diversity implementation plan. Individual staff can take part in corporate training on matters such as drug misuse, alcoholism. There is no structured staff development plan which is linked to the appraisal system and business objectives.

62. There is reasonable access for people with limited mobility to EFS's premises and

those of its subcontractors. The organisation provides resources such as left-handed or right-handed keyboards, monitor balls instead of a mouse, enlarged text on computer screens, special chairs for learners with back problems, and learning materials on coloured paper for clients with dyslexia. EFS currently provides individual support for a deaf client.

Quality assurance

Contributory grade 4

63. EFS has taken significant steps to improve its provision. Managers and staff have identified serious problems with the provision and acted to resolve them. They have sought help with quality assurance from one of the subcontractors. EFS has consulted its staff and the council about how to deal with inappropriately qualified and experienced staff. The organisation has been restructured and some redundancies have been made. New staffing arrangements will particularly strengthen the teaching of literacy and numeracy, quality assurance, E2E provision and links with employers. There are revised job descriptions for the new and restructured posts. A regular schedule of meetings has been arranged with trainers, advisers and subcontractors. Their minutes and actions are well recorded.

64. EFS's self-assessment process is satisfactory. The most recent self-assessment report was produced in March 2003. Senior staff are fully involved in the self-assessment process but clients and subcontractors are not. The self-assessment report matched some of the strengths and weaknesses found by inspectors, although some of the strengths identified were no more than normal practice. Additional strengths and weaknesses were identified by inspectors. A training away day was used by senior members of staff to discuss and develop the self-assessment report.

65. The quality assurance procedures for training are inadequate. They are out of date and are not reviewed regularly. They are not actively used, and staff have little knowledge of them. There are no procedures for quality assuring the subcontracted training. There have been no quality audits until very recently. The results of these and the related action plans have not yet been sent to the subcontractors. Managers have not yet acted to improve the quality assurance procedures. Internal verification is not well co-ordinated throughout the company and varies in quality across programmes. Where there is good practice, it is not being shared. EFS has recognised these issues and is beginning to deal with them. There are insufficient teaching observations to inform managers of the quality of teaching. Some of the subcontractors carry out their own teaching observations but do not pass on the results to EFS.

66. EFS does not have a formal system for gathering the views of learners, staff and subcontractors. Some feedback has been collected from learners but it has not been analysed or used to effect changes.

AREAS OF LEARNING

Business administration, management & professional

Grade 3

Programmes inspected	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Work-based learning for adults	58	3
New Deal 18-24	6	None

The following strengths and weaknesses were identified during this inspection:

Strengths

- good development of learners' personal skills
- good progression within the programme
- good resources

Weaknesses

- insufficient opportunity for learners to develop administrative skills
- poor rate of progression into jobs

Achievement and standards

67. The retention rate is satisfactory. In 2002-03, 64 per cent of clients on longer occupational training (LOT) were retained. In full-time education and training, the retention rate in 2003-04 was 51 per cent, and 5 per cent of learners are still on the programme. Ninety per cent of learners on the intensive activity period (IAP) were retained. On short job-focused training (SJFT), 50 per cent of clients were retained in 2002-03, and in 2003-04 to date the retention rate has risen to 65 per cent with a further 24 per cent still in training.

68. The achievement rate is not satisfactory. The overall rate for 2002-03 was 36 per cent. So far this year the achievement rate is 4 per cent, with a further 54 per cent of clients still on the programme. The achievement rate on the SJFT programme was 30 per cent in 2002-03. So far in 2003-04, 59 per cent of clients have achieved, with 24 per cent still on programme. However, the employment rate has remained poor at 15 per cent. On the LOT programme, 36 per cent of clients achieved their qualifications in 2002-03, while 10 per cent progressed into employment or further training. On the IAP programme the achievement rate was 54 per cent but only 13 per cent of clients progressed to employment or further training. On the full-time education and training programme 23 per cent of clients achieved and 18 per cent progressed.

69. For clients on work-based learning for adults, the rate of progression into employment or further training was poor at 12 per cent in 2002-03. So far in 2003-04, 20 per cent of clients have progressed to employment or further training, and 53 per cent are still in training.

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

Jobcentre Plus funded programmes																
New Deal 18-24																
	2003-04		2002-03													
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number of starts	16		39													
Retained*	2		20	51												
Planned learning completed	0		9	23												
Gained job	2		7	18												
Still in training	4		2	5												

*retained clients are those who have stayed in learning for at least the planned duration of their programme, or have successfully completed their programme within the time allowed, or who have gained employment during their time on the programme

Jobcentre Plus funded programmes																
Work-based learning for adults																
	2003-04		2002-03													
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number of starts	105		263													
Retained*	23		175	67												
Planned learning completed	12		101	38												
Gained job	21		31	12												
Still in training	56		2	1												

*retained clients are those who have stayed in learning for at least the planned duration of their programme, or have successfully completed their programme within the time allowed, or who have gained employment during their time on the programme

Quality of education and training

70. There is good development of clients' personal skills with the support of tutors and specialist staff. Some clients have no experience of computers and their confidence is boosted immediately by achieving short-term targets. Others have considerable technical computer experience but significant gaps in their knowledge of business software. Clients are given the opportunity to work towards their own goals at their own pace, and many make rapid and significant progress which increases their morale considerably.

71. Tutors and specialist jobsearch staff give good support and encouragement to help clients' identify relevant prior experience and achievements. These include customer service experience gained in retail or catering work, or supervisory skills acquired by leading technical teams. Clients are guided in writing curriculum vitae to highlight and

emphasise these transferable employment skills, and this boosts their confidence. Jobsearch activities such as using the telephone and working with other clients and staff helps to improve their inter-personal skills. Hours of attendance at the centre are flexible and include the option of Saturday mornings. This improves access for those with family or other commitments, and for some clients who wish to complete their qualifications after they gain employment.

72. There is good progression within the programme. Programmes are run according to level and module in a number of rooms staffed by a well-co-ordinated team of tutors. Each client is allocated to a tutor on arrival. Tutors monitor clients' progress and attendance as well as delivering training which is generally of a good standard. Clients work their way through a structured series of modules and qualifications in business-related software, leading to nationally recognised certification. These include modules in word processing, databases, spreadsheets and presentation packages. Some clients choose to take part in a work placement to gain relevant experience and consolidate their skills. At the same time they continue with jobsearch, but with additional confidence and belief in themselves. The work experience supplements their work record on their curriculum vitae and provides a recent work reference when applying for posts. This is particularly helpful if they have had a break from employment through redundancy, raising a family, illness or other reasons.

73. The subcontractor has developed good links with a range of local private and public sector organisations. One client was working in a very small, particularly specialist programming company developing software products connected to the mobile telephone industry. This work considerably developed her knowledge and skills. This strength was identified by the provider.

74. Resources are good. All the computers are new and networked. All run up-to-date packages smoothly, with some spare capacity. There is regulated internet and broadband connection. Most teaching is good with competent and sufficiently qualified staff. Most training is delivered individually with clients working at their own pace. There are sufficient good-quality learning materials. Clients' progress is rarely delayed by any shortage of resources. Training is delivered in a suite of accommodation with rooms dedicated to specific levels of training. Tutors are always available.

75. Induction is satisfactory. Clients receive a thorough initial induction, and their literacy and numeracy skills are assessed at the programme centre before they are referred for business administration training. When clients start on the IT programmes, they receive a further induction from tutors which covers how the programmes are run, what is expected of them, what their entitlement is, health and safety, and aspects of equality of opportunity. Few clients have any specific numeracy and literacy needs, but those who have can be supported by specialist staff at the programme centre. Tutors carry out progress reviews weekly for the first four weeks, and then monthly. These are satisfactory, although the targets set are not always detailed enough and there is little checking and reinforcement of clients' understanding of equality of opportunity.

76. Although there is good development of business IT skills there is insufficient

opportunity for clients to develop administrative skills during the programmes. Computer assignments are not used to develop new knowledge and understanding of other vital office functions, or to build upon and update clients' existing skills.

Leadership and management

77. The subcontractor's management of programmes is satisfactory. It conducts its own quality assurance by sampling training activities and carrying out regular surveys to collect feedback from clients. In response to clients' feedback, action was taken to extend access for clients on Saturday mornings and to purchase new computers. There are good links between EFS and the subcontractor, made easier because they are both in the same building. There is good sharing of facilities, and exchange of expertise and ideas. The subcontractor attends monthly subcontractors' meetings run by EFS and has made useful contributions to EFS's self-assessment report. EFS has sought advice from the subcontractor to develop its own quality assurance procedures.

78. Learners on all programmes have good access to literacy and numeracy assessment and support through the Life Skills Centre. In the self-assessment report this area of learning was combined with ICT and other areas of work-based learning. Most of its strengths or weaknesses were identified.

Information & communications technology**Grade 4**

Programmes inspected	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Work-based learning for adults	24	4
New Deal 18-24	5	None

The following strengths and weaknesses were identified during this inspection:

Strengths

- good access to training for disadvantaged clients

Weaknesses

- poor rate of progress into jobs
- no accreditation for some clients
- poor management of subcontracted provision

Achievement and standards

79. The retention rate is satisfactory. In 2002-03, 40 per cent of New Deal clients and 51 per cent of clients on work-based learning for adults were retained. There is a poor rate of progression into jobs or further training. Work experience is not a feature of the programmes. There are facilities for jobsearch, but clients concentrate on developing skills. This weakness was identified in the self-assessment report. In the area of learning as a whole only 27 per cent of clients progressed into employment or further training.

80. In 2002-03, 31 per cent of clients achieved qualifications. On the full-time education and training programme, qualifications were achieved by 30 per cent of clients but only 17 per cent progressed into work or further training. On the LOT programme, 7 per cent achieved qualifications, but only 17 per cent progressed into employment or further training. Sixty-two per cent of clients on the IAP were retained and achieved qualifications.

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

Jobcentre Plus funded programmes																	
New Deal 18-24	2003-04		2002-03														
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
	Number of starts	6		10													
Retained*	0		4	40													
Planned learning completed	0		3	30													
Gained job	1		2	20													
Still in training	4		1	10													

*retained clients are those who have stayed in learning for at least the planned duration of their programme, or have successfully completed their programme within the time allowed, or who have gained employment during their time on the programme

Jobcentre Plus funded programmes																	
Work-based learning for adults	2003-04		2002-03														
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
	Number of starts	27		76													
Retained*	1		39	51													
Planned learning completed	1		24	32													
Gained job	5		21	28													
Still in training	19		5	7													

*retained clients are those who have stayed in learning for at least the planned duration of their programme, or have successfully completed their programme within the time allowed, or who have gained employment during their time on the programme

Quality of education and training

81. There is good access to, and participation in, training by disadvantaged clients. This strength was identified in the self-assessment report. The subcontractor has good links with local churches, ethnic groups and organisations for the homeless, and is an active partner in a local consortium of these agencies. These links have been reinforced and developed to promote programmes to clients disadvantaged, for example, through illness, redundancy and homelessness. Many clients have previously worked in related careers such as pharmaceutical research, graphic design, telecommunications and electrical engineering, and some with higher-level qualifications. Attendance hours are flexible and teaching rooms are accessible to clients with limited mobility.

82. Resources are satisfactory. Training is delivered by a competent team of full- and part-time tutors who have specialist knowledge and expertise. Programmes are run in open-plan accommodation with areas dedicated to the different programmes. There is a

mixture of computers, but most are adequate for the packages for which they are used. The subcontractor has relied on machines inherited from other organisations which it is able to upgrade in-house. There is regulated internet and broadband access. There is an adequate stock of printed reference materials, learning packs and CD-ROMs. Clients also use their initiative to identify external sources of materials.

83. Teaching is satisfactory. It is informal and is provided on a highly individual basis. Clients work independently, and collaboratively in groups, developing research and critical evaluative skills. To develop their skills, clients on one programme work on projects which they research, design and follow through to implementation. These are discussed and agreed with their tutor who provides teaching, advice and support on demand. On another programme, clients design, implement and evaluate graphic products such as web designs, complex presentations and promotional materials, which they then discuss and evaluate in groups.

84. Initial assessment and induction are satisfactory. Some clients receive an initial induction and a literacy and numeracy assessment at the programme centre before being referred to the ICT programmes. Others come directly to the subcontractor who refers them to the programme centre. The subcontractor is not always given the results of the literacy and numeracy assessments. Once clients start their programme, they receive a further induction from staff which satisfactorily covers how the programmes are run, what is expected of them, what their entitlement is, health and safety and aspects of equality of opportunity. There are no clients with specific numeracy and literacy needs but there is access to specialist staff at the programme centre if necessary. The subcontractor can refer clients for specialist personal support from relevant expert community agencies.

85. Clients' progress reviews are satisfactory. They are carried out by tutors, weekly for the first four weeks, and then monthly. Some targets set at reviews are not sufficiently detailed, and there is little checking and reinforcement of clients' understanding of equality of opportunity. Some reviews do not take place on time.

86. Some clients gain no accreditation for their learning. The subcontractor is currently seeking external approval to provide certification, but this has been a long process. Some clients have already completed their programme and left with no certification of any kind. Their work has been retained by the subcontractor to seek certification as soon as this becomes possible. Registration and certification for other programmes is done externally through other approved centres. Clients can be assessed online or attend in person as required.

Leadership and management

87. EFS's management of the subcontractor is unsatisfactory. The management processes have been overhauled during the past 12 months and are still being developed. The subcontractor has little experience of operating government-funded provision and relies heavily on advice, guidance and support from EFS and Jobcentre Plus personnel. EFS's staff and procedures have changed considerably during this time, which

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has been confusing for the subcontractor, with breakdowns in communication and insufficient consistency.

88. The subcontractor has not had continuity in its contacts with EFS, but feels that this has improved very recently. The subcontractor's staff welcome and value the reliable guidance EFS can offer. They attend EFS's meetings for subcontractors and have begun to take advantage of the staff development opportunities offered. They have little experience of quality assuring training programmes but are beginning to establish this and gather more continuous and reliable management information.

Foundation programmes**Grade 3**

Programmes inspected	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Programme centres	63	3
Entry to Employment	8	2
New Deal 18-24	4	None
Work-based learning for adults	4	None
Life Skills	3	None

The following strengths and weaknesses were identified during this inspection:

Strengths

- good training and learning
- significant development of literacy and numeracy skills
- strong individual support
- good resources

Weaknesses

- insufficient monitoring of training
- weak review process
- insufficient opportunities for work experience

Achievement and standards

89. Retention rates on foundation programmes are satisfactory. The only full year for which retention and achievement data are available is 2002-03. In 2002-03, 50 per cent of clients attending programme centre provision were retained, as were 46 per cent of learners on Life Skills, the precursor to E2E, and 53 per cent on work-based learning for adults.

90. The aim of the programme centre provision is to help learners to gain employment. In 2002-03, only 11 per cent of clients gained employment. However, in 2003-04, 40 per cent of programme centre clients have gained employment so far, and a further 54 per cent are still on the programme. These outcomes are good for this stage in the programme and a great improvement over 2002-03.

91. In 2002-03, 31 per cent of Life Skills learners progressed to appropriate employment or training. In August 2003 the programme was replaced by E2E, but no learners have yet completed this programme. Most Life Skills learners transferred to the E2E programme. The three remaining Life Skills learners are completing a very individualised literacy and numeracy programme. In 2002-03, 52 per cent of clients on the IAP of New Deal 25+ achieved their qualifications. Numbers on other foundation programmes in 2002-03 were too small to make separate valid judgments. The overall achievement rate

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on foundation programmes is now satisfactory. The company has introduced strategies to improve retention and achievement on E2E programmes, which include bonuses paid to learners for achievement of milestones, and for progressing to jobs or training, but it is too early to judge the impact of these.

92. Attendance and punctuality are good. Learners are rewarded for good attendance, with in-house certificates. Although tutors monitor absence and lateness, they do not keep formal registers.

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

LSC funded work-based learning																	
Life Skills	2003-04		2002-03														
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
	Number of starts			52													
Retained*			21	40													
Successfully completed			14	27													
Still in learning			3	6													

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

LSC funded work-based learning																	
Entry to Employment	2003-04																
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
	Number of starts	9															
Progression ¹	0																
Achieved objectives ²	0																
Still in learning	8																

1. Measured in terms of learners' movement to further training, education or employment, during or after their training

2. These being the key objectives identified for each learner while on E2E

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Jobcentre Plus funded programmes																
New Deal 18-24																
	2003-04		2002-03													
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number of starts	5		5													
Retained*	1		3	60												
Planned learning completed	0		3	60												
Gained job	1		0	0												
Still in training	2		2	40												

*retained clients are those who have stayed in learning for at least the planned duration of their programme, or have successfully completed their programme within the time allowed, or who have gained employment during their time on the programme

Jobcentre Plus funded programmes																
Programme Centres																
	2003-04		2002-03													
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number of starts	116		467													
Retained*	12		232	50												
Planned learning completed	4		155	33												
Gained job	46		51	11												
Still in training	63		0	0												

*retained clients are those who have stayed in learning for at least the planned duration of their programme, or have successfully completed their programme within the time allowed, or who have gained employment during their time on the programme

Jobcentre Plus funded programmes																
Work-based learning for adults																
	2003-04		2002-03													
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number of starts			49													
Retained*			26	53												
Planned learning completed			24	49												
Gained job			4	8												
Still in training			4	8												

*retained clients are those who have stayed in learning for at least the planned duration of their programme, or have successfully completed their programme within the time allowed, or who have gained employment during their time on the programme

Quality of education and training

93. Training and learning is of a high standard, and this was recognised in the self-assessment report. Programmes are individualised, so that learners can work at their own pace with support from tutors when they will need it. Group sessions are planned well with a good mix of background knowledge, practice and reinforcement of previous learning. Learners are enthusiastic and participate confidently in discussion. In a horticulture lesson, New Deal and E2E learners discussed reasons for plant maintenance knowledgeably, and carried out practical work on plants before planting them in public amenity areas. They were able to recall earlier learning on health and safety and relate this to the handling of pesticides. Tutors make good use of the flipchart to build up learners' ideas and help them retain knowledge. Tutors are sensitive to learners' needs. For example, in a programme centre session on job applications, the tutor enunciated words carefully to ensure a learner with a hearing impairment could follow the lesson.

94. There is significant development of literacy and numeracy skills, as identified in the self-assessment report. Learners enter training with diverse levels of literacy and numeracy. Those on E2E, full-time education and training and BET programmes have a comprehensive initial assessment that uses a good range of initial assessment materials. Learning styles, reading and spelling ability and occupational aptitude are also tested. Each learner is allocated a personal trainer, who supports them throughout their programme. Each time the learner visits the training centre, the trainer sets a series of tasks to be completed during the day. Learners choose the order in which they complete tasks and can work independently or with the tutor's support in small workshops. Work is marked promptly and constructively. The workshops have a mix of young and adult learners, who gain from each other's experience and learn to work collaboratively. Learning resources are particularly good. Staff have designed excellent worksheets and adapted books to suit the levels and interests of learners. In one workshop observed, a 40-year old client on BET was learning to read and write by using word cards to make sentences. By the end of a few weeks she was able to read a simple book which had been specially adapted for her needs. An E2E learner was learning how to use different tenses and capital letters. There is good integration of numeracy and literacy with vocational training. For example, learners on a horticulture programme were required to learn spellings of plants in Latin and English, to read instructions for pesticides and to measure gardens in order to work out the number of plants needed. Programme centre clients, and learners who are following subcontracted programmes and who are diagnosed as requiring additional support for literacy and numeracy are assessed by specialist staff and receive good individual support from the Skills for Life department if they choose. There is a structured programme of tailor-made workshops to develop staff in the teaching of literacy and numeracy both within the foundation area and across vocational departments.

95. EFS staff offer learners strong individual support. This was identified in the self-assessment report. Learners' confidence and self-esteem improve quickly. Staff are friendly and approachable, and are available on demand to give guidance and support on personal issues. Several staff have counselling or mentoring qualifications. There is a

good uptake of the external mentoring service offered to all learners, which helps vulnerable learners to cope with their problems and continue with their training. The good links with external support agencies enable staff to refer learners for counselling on drugs, debt and homelessness. The intensive support has helped one homeless learner to improve his numeracy and literacy skills dramatically since joining the training. Advice and guidance are satisfactory. Learners are given sufficient information about the programmes and are guided in their choice of career, particularly in the course of jobsearch sessions and work-experience programmes.

96. Resources are good, particularly in horticulture, where learners have a real working environment with access to well-equipped outbuildings, commercial glasshouses and beds for planting out shrubs and plants for transfer to public amenity spaces. Adults and young people on all programmes have access to up-to-date computer equipment and software, although a few learners would like to have access to additional software. Jobsearch facilities are comprehensive. Within the programme centre all major newspapers are available, there is open broadband access to the internet, and there are trade magazines and computerised careers guidance programmes. The jobsearch facilities designed for programme centre clients are open to learners from all areas of learning. The facilities are staffed by specialist advisers who are always available to assist learners. Jobseeking skills workshops are provided by programme centre staff on topics including interview techniques, making applications, and compiling curriculum vitae. The workshops are regularly attended by learners from other programmes. Learners on adult programmes are encouraged to participate in the varied range of additional activities provided for the E2E programme, which develop social and personal skills. These include visits to local places of interest, cooking and money management. E2E learners also develop personal skills through projects on topics which interest them.

97. All learners have a good induction, which introduces them to the programme, and covers health and safety, their rights and responsibilities, the complaints and appeals procedures, and the design of individualised learning programmes. Although equality and diversity are introduced during induction, they are not reinforced sufficiently in progress reviews or during training.

98. There is insufficient monitoring of training at management level. Assessment and internal verification practices are weak on two programmes affecting a small number of learners. Learners' progress is not reviewed frequently enough. Assessments have not always been carried out in a timely manner. Some staff do not have appropriate qualifications. There are examples of evidence in learners' portfolios which does not meet the performance criteria. Some portfolios contain insufficient evidence that internal verification has taken place. Insufficient feedback has been given to assessors on their performance. These problems have now been recognised by EFS which has acted promptly to deal with them.

99. The progress review process is weak, as was recognised in the self-assessment report. There are several different versions of the review documents. Staff understanding of the purpose of, and requirements for, reviews is not always clear. Reviews of learners' progress do not occur frequently enough. Where dates are

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scheduled for reviews they are not always adhered to. Learners are set work on a day-to-day basis and this is monitored by tutors. At reviews, future activities are discussed but specific, measurable, timed targets are often not set. Review documents sometimes do not report whether targets set for the previous period have been met. Learners are not clear how the short- and mid-term targets relate to their long-term goals. Many reviews do not focus on the learners' planned outcomes. Many learners do not know what qualification they are working towards. They have a poor understanding of how each aspect of their programme combines to help them achieve their goals. The records held in learners' files are sometimes incomplete.

100. There are insufficient opportunities for work experience, particularly on E2E programmes. There are delays in obtaining work placements and some learners feel disadvantaged by this. Work experience is always not linked effectively with the rest of the learners' programme. The company is currently recruiting a work-experience co-ordinator to remedy this.

Leadership and management

101. Most day-to-day aspects of the programme are well managed. The teams work well together, meeting regularly to share ideas and discuss individuals on E2E, BET and New Deal 18-24 programmes. Programme centre provision is also well managed and there are regular minuted staff meetings. Learners on all programmes have good access to literacy and numeracy assessment and support. EFS has developed an appropriate range of activities, work tasters and short courses for E2E learners to choose from. Staff collaborate well to plan individual projects and activities, but the separate activities that make up a learning programme are not sufficiently co-ordinated.

102. Equal opportunities training is integrated with the programme. Learners discuss the meaning of equal opportunities in workshops and progress reviews, and projects are set to explore issues further.

103. Quality assurance is weak. There is insufficient monitoring of training and of subcontracted provision. However, there is frequent communication with the staff of the subcontractor that runs the programme centre on the EFS site. The self-assessment report was broadly accurate.