

INSPECTION REPORT

Doncaster Rotherham & District Motor Trades GTA Ltd

31 October 2003



ADULT LEARNING
INSPECTORATE

Grading

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

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

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

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

The two grading scales relate to each other as follows:

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

Adult Learning Inspectorate

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

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

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

Overall judgement

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

Provision will normally be deemed to be inadequate where:

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

This provision will be subject to a full reinspection.

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

INSPECTION REPORT

Doncaster Rotherham & District Motor Trades GTA Ltd

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INSPECTION REPORT

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROVIDER

1. Doncaster Rotherham and District Motor Trades Group Training Association Limited (Doncaster GTA) is a private training provider and a registered charity. It was founded in 1972 and became a company limited by guarantee in 1985. The company specialises in training for the motor trade and road haulage industries and has contracts to deliver training with major international motor manufacturers and national retail motor groups. It contracts with the South Yorkshire Learning and Skills Council (LSC) for the provision of work-based learning in motor vehicle engineering and business administration. Doncaster GTA also offers commercial training for other international, national and local companies, including lift-truck training, goods vehicle driving, dangerous goods consultation, and health and safety consultation. The company has a five-acre site at Armthorpe on the outskirts of Doncaster. It has a comprehensive range of specialist training workshops and classrooms for motor vehicle, business administration and warehouse training. It employs 30 staff.

2. Doncaster GTA has a board of trustees consisting of eight members. It employs 33 staff, of whom 14 are directly involved in training and assessment. There are two part-time staff, one of whom is a tutor/assessor and the other is a health and safety officer. Doncaster GTA derives 55 per cent of its funding from the LSC for government-funded training.

3. Doncaster GTA is accredited as an Investor in People. This is a national standard for improving an organisation's performance through its people.

4. Doncaster GTA trains motor vehicle engineering and business administration learners in South Yorkshire. There are 171 learners on programme, of whom 46 are advanced modern apprentices, 120 are foundation modern apprentices and five are following national vocational qualification (NVQ) programmes through work-based learning. Learners receive off-the-job training at the company's own premises and are placed with local companies for on-the-job training and NVQ assessments. Warehousing training was not inspected, as there were too few learners in this area, but it is included in the leadership and management section of the report. The training is funded through South Yorkshire LSC.

5. Doncaster GTA provides training and assessment in South Yorkshire, particularly in Doncaster, Rotherham, Barnsley and Sheffield. The economy of the district is dominated by public administration, education and health, distribution, hotels and restaurants, and manufacturing, which accounts for around two-thirds of all employment. In April 2003, the rate of unemployment in South Yorkshire was 3.1 per cent, compared with 2.9 per cent in Yorkshire and Humberside and 2.6 per cent nationally. The unemployment rate was 3 per cent in Doncaster and 2.9 per cent in Rotherham. In 2001, South Yorkshire's minority ethnic communities represented 4.8 per cent of the population, compared with 6.5 per cent in Yorkshire and Humberside and 9.1 per cent nationally. Minority ethnic

groups formed 2.3 per cent of the population of Doncaster and 3.1 per cent of the population of Rotherham.

6. In 2001, 62 per cent of 16 year olds and 52 per cent of 17 year olds in Yorkshire and Humberside participated in full-time education, compared with 71 per cent of 16 year olds and 58 per cent of 17 year olds nationally.

SCOPE OF PROVISION

Engineering, technology & manufacturing

7. The company has 151 learners on motor vehicle maintenance and repair training programmes, of whom 38 are advanced modern apprentices, 108 are foundation modern apprentices and five are working towards a level 2 NVQ in maintenance and repair (light vehicles). Of the advanced modern apprentices, 19 are training in light vehicle mechanics, four are training in heavy vehicle mechanics, and 14 are training in body repair courses. Forty-one foundation modern apprentices are training in light vehicle mechanics, 23 are training in heavy vehicle mechanics and 39 are training in body repair courses. One advanced modern apprentice and five foundation modern apprentices are training in motor cycle repair and auto electricians programmes. One hundred and thirty-nine learners are employed, four are on work placements and eight are in the training centre awaiting work placements. All learners work in local companies, some of which are main vehicle dealerships and others are small independent garages. Off-the-job training is carried out in the providers' training centre. All learners have frequent workplace assessments. Learners' progress reviews take place every 12 weeks.

Business administration, management & professional

8. Doncaster GTA provides modern apprenticeships in business administration. There are eight advanced modern apprentices and 12 foundation modern apprentices. Learners are able to join the programme at any time of year. Recruitment is by referral, from Connexions and schools, and direct responses to advertisements. All learners attend a one-day induction programme at the training centre. Learners can attend day-release sessions at the training centre for portfolio-building, key skills development and information technology (IT) training. Two qualified assessors visit the learners every 12 weeks to complete progress reviews and work-based assessment. Foundation and advanced modern apprenticeships are usually completed in 15 months and two years, respectively.

ABOUT THE INSPECTION

Number of inspectors	6
Number of inspection days	23
Number of learner interviews	77
Number of staff interviews	22
Number of employer interviews	30
Number of locations/sites/learning centres visited	1
Number of visits	30

OVERALL JUDGEMENT

9. The quality of the provision is not adequate to meet the reasonable needs of those receiving it. More specifically, Doncaster GTA's leadership and management are unsatisfactory, including its quality assurance arrangements. Its arrangements for equality of opportunity are satisfactory. The quality of work-based learning in engineering and in business administration is unsatisfactory.

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

Engineering, technology & manufacturing	4
Contributory grades:	
Work-based learning for young people	4

Business administration, management & professional	4
Contributory grades:	
Work-based learning for young people	4

KEY FINDINGS

Achievement and standards

10. Business administration foundation modern apprentices make good progress with their NVQs with **very effective short-term target-setting by tutors**. The targets are reviewed weekly and keep learners focused on unit achievement at an early stage in the

programme. Retention rates are poor. Of the 17 learners who started on the programme in 2001-02, nine completed and two remain in learning. Only six of the 12 learners recruited in 2002-03 are still in training. In the current year, eight learners have been recruited, four of whom have already left the programme.

11. **Advanced modern apprentices in business administration make slow progress** in completing their frameworks. Some learners have made very slow progress with NVQ portfolios and most learners have made insufficient progress with key skills.

12. **In engineering, retention and achievement rates are poor**, in particular, the retention rates for advanced modern apprentices, which are approximately 50 per cent over the past five years. The foundation modern apprenticeship and NVQ programmes have retention rates of approximately 40 per cent. Completion rates on all programmes are poor. The completion of advanced modern apprenticeship frameworks ranges from 3 per cent to 19 per cent during the period from 1997 to 2000. Over the past seven years, of 196 learners starting advanced modern apprenticeships, only 18 have completed the qualification and 38 remain in training. The completion rate for foundation modern apprenticeships is under 30 per cent for the same period. The NVQ learners have had achievement rates ranging from 25 to 29 per cent during the same period, with a more recent rise to over 50 per cent in the 2000-01 contract year.

Quality of education and training

13. **Engineering learners have access to a very responsive assessment service.** Requests for assessment can be made at very short notice, which enables learners to take the opportunity for observed assessment as specific jobs arise in the workplace. Employers are fully aware of this service and often instigate assessment requests, ensuring that learners take advantage of relevant assessment opportunities. In many instances, assessors are able to start an assessment within 15 minutes of a telephone request being made. Where assessment opportunities are not available at a learner's workplace, suitable alternative arrangements are made for assessment at another location.

14. **Engineering learners develop good practical skills in the workplace.** Learners are given frequent opportunities to acquire vocational skills and many are assigned workplace mentors who provide assistance and supervise the learner's activities in acquiring relevant skills. All learners are placed with experienced technicians during their periods of training. Employers provide ample opportunities for learners' to acquire the necessary skills before formal assessment.

15. Learners' progress reviews are satisfactory. They take place every 12 weeks in the workplace. Targets are set, with achievement dates, and these targets are reviewed at the weekly day-release sessions. The review states how well the learner is progressing and identifies any specific actions required. Sometimes comments are general and do not focus on progress, or specific aspects of the learner's programme. Health and safety and equality of opportunity are briefly mentioned during progress reviews, but comprehension is not confirmed. Learners have an individual learning plan which has

target dates for achievement of all aspects of the framework. These plans are regularly updated.

16. Teaching in business administration is satisfactory. In engineering, teaching is satisfactory or better, with adequate planning and good delivery, but background knowledge is not adequately reinforced. Tutors are able to relate background knowledge teaching to current technology using clear examples, but off-the-job training is mainly theoretical, with insufficient practical content. Employers are not aware of the planned content, sequence or schedule of topics for off-the-job training, they are unable to co-ordinate it with workplace activities.

17. **Business administration learners have particularly good individual support in the training centre.** The day-release groups are small and give learners the opportunity to develop their skills with individual support from tutors. Engineering learners reported that there are good, productive working relationships between themselves and the provider's staff.

18. **Initial assessment does not lead to effective appropriate support.** Improvements were made to the initial assessment of literacy and numeracy abilities in July 2003. Recent starters on all programmes have been assessed during induction. Seventy-three per cent of these new starters need some support with literacy of numeracy, but no further diagnosis of identified needs is carried out. One member of staff has responsibility for the delivery of literacy and numeracy support to all occupational areas. This member of staff does not have relevant qualifications to provide literacy and numeracy support. Some learners are unable to obtain the detailed support they need. Staff are able to help and support learners with general literacy problems, but have neither the training nor the resources to support learners with more fundamental needs.

19. Key skills training were not introduced at the start of the programme for many learners. Business administration learners are required to develop separate portfolios of evidence for NVQs and key skills qualifications. In some cases, there is insufficient cross-referencing of evidence. Key skills evidence for foundation modern apprentices in business administration tends to be generated in the training centre, with learners preparing projects that are not related to their work. Key skills training and assessment has recently improved in engineering. Assessments are now being integrated with the occupational assessments, but for those learners who have been on the programme for a considerable period, key skills training and assessment has not been integrated and the achievement of qualifications has been poor. Engineering **learners' knowledge of key skills requirements is very limited.**

20. **Doncaster GTA does not conduct sufficient assessment by direct observation in business administration.** Learners are visited only three times during the programme for the tutor to assess by observation. Learners are required to produce a lot of product evidence, making portfolios unnecessarily large.

Leadership and management

21. **Communications are good within Doncaster GTA.** Staff and directors meet frequently, minutes are effectively recorded and available to all staff. Meetings have a set agenda, with a clear focus on training. A good end-of-year summary document is produced by the managing director and presented to all staff. This includes key performance indicators and financial information, updates on staff development activities carried out, and other significant developments during the year. It identifies key issues facing the organisation.

22. **Doncaster GTA has effective links with many external agencies,** including major motor vehicle manufacturers, local schools, local community groups and employers. These links have resulted in substantial donations of equipment. Doncaster GTA leases its facilities to some of these agencies, generating an income which is invested in learning resources.

23. **The company's staff development is good and well targeted** to resolve weaknesses in the organisation, or skills gaps. Key staff have had training to improve their awareness of key skills and adult literacy and numeracy issues. Staff have achieved qualifications appropriate to their roles, which include supervisory and management qualifications, as well as vocational awards and assessor and internal verifier qualifications. Information gained from external events is shared effectively.

24. The business administration team works closely to support learners. Staff have accurate job descriptions and are able to identify their own development needs during annual appraisals.

25. Doncaster GTA has an adequate business plan and a three-year development plan, written by the managing director. The plans identify key objectives for the organisation and key staff development needs, as well as setting targets for recruitment and achievement in line with LSC contracts. The short-term targets for improvement in achievement are not sufficiently challenging and there are no targets for retention.

26. **Strategies for the implementation and management of key skills training are weak.** Key skills training has been introduced towards the end of the learners' training programmes. There is insufficient integration of key skills with vocational training. The importance of key skills is not promoted sufficiently to learners and employers. Insufficient priority is given to key skills training by Doncaster GTA.

27. **Management information is not used effectively.** Doncaster GTA monitors recruitment and achievement against its contractual targets, but does not effectively analyse trends, or identify key issues related to retention and achievement. The use of target-setting to raise retention and achievement rates is inadequate.

28. The internal verification system is satisfactory. The verification of portfolios of evidence is planned in advance, using a planning chart to ensure that learners are verified in all units. The assessors are observed in accordance with the plan. Learners'

documents show evidence of internal verification activity. Verification is progressive, it ensures that the evidence is of a satisfactory standard before the request for certificates. Unit certificates are requested soon after they are achieved. Verification is carried out on all engineering portfolios before the request for a full certificate.

29. Equality of opportunity is introduced during induction. No reinforcement of the issues occurs during the rest of the programme. **A good initiative has been taken to raise learners' awareness of equality of opportunity.** A learning package has been introduced with the aim of reinforcing equality of opportunity and health and safety. Learners that have been introduced to this package have good recollection and knowledge of equality of opportunity. Not all learners have the package. Some employers do not have equal opportunities policies. **Equality of opportunity is not monitored sufficiently in the workplace.**

30. The self-assessment report for engineering identified poor retention and achievement. It also identified the good assessment opportunities and work placements. The self-assessment report for Doncaster GTA did not clearly define the role of the business administration unit. Inspectors found strengths and weaknesses in business administration that were not identified by the company. Some judgements in the self-assessment report did not match those of inspectors and further weaknesses were found that had not been identified by Doncaster GTA.

31. **Quality assurance is inadequate to monitor training programme performance and promote continuous improvement.**

32. The company has problems with retention and achievement on all programmes. There is no evidence of an effective strategy to resolve these issues.

33. Doncaster GTA has no formal system to monitor or evaluate the support requirements for literacy and numeracy needs.

The following strengths and weaknesses were identified during this inspection:

Leadership and management

Strengths

- good communication
- effective external links
- good staff development
- good initiative to raise learners' awareness of equality of opportunity

Weaknesses

- weak management of key skills training
- insufficient use of management information
- insufficient monitoring of equality of opportunity in the workplace

- inadequate quality assurance

Engineering, technology & manufacturing

Strengths

- good development of practical skills in the workplace
- very flexible assessment system

Weaknesses

- poor retention and achievement rates
- inadequate reinforcement of background knowledge
- insufficient awareness of modern apprenticeship framework by learners
- insufficient use of initial assessment to plan individual support

Business administration, management & professional

Strengths

- good individual support in the training centre
- effective short-term target-setting for foundation modern apprentices

Weaknesses

- poor retention on foundation modern apprenticeship programme
- slow progress by advanced modern apprentices
- insufficient assessment by direct observation
- insufficient structured support for additional needs

WHAT LEARNERS LIKE ABOUT DONCASTER ROTHERHAM & DISTRICT MOTOR TRADES GTA LTD:

- the variety of courses available
- the flexible access to assessment
- the friendly, helpful staff
- the small groups and good individual support
- the good variety of vehicles for motor vehicle learners

WHAT LEARNERS THINK DONCASTER ROTHERHAM & DISTRICT MOTOR TRADES GTA LTD COULD IMPROVE:

- the number of additional qualifications
- the variety of teaching methods for key skills
- background knowledge questions - less repetition
- the time allowed to work on portfolios or coursework at work
- the number of day-release sessions on level 3 business administration
- access to equipment
- the amount of practical work

KEY CHALLENGES FOR DONCASTER ROTHERHAM & DISTRICT MOTOR TRADES GTA LTD:

- ensure that quality assurance leads to improvement in all aspects
- develop effective strategies to improve retention and achievement rates
- effectively use management information for continuous improvement
- effectively link background knowledge and practical training
- identify and meet individual learners' needs
- develop an effective key skills strategy
- share good practice in assessment
- increase employers' involvement

DETAILED INSPECTION FINDINGS

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Grade 4

The following strengths and weaknesses were identified during this inspection:

Strengths

- good communication
- effective external links
- good staff development
- good initiative to raise learners' awareness of equality of opportunity

Weaknesses

- weak management of key skills training
- insufficient use of management information
- insufficient monitoring of equality of opportunity in the workplace
- inadequate quality assurance

34. Communications are good within Doncaster GTA. Staff and directors meet frequently, minutes are effectively recorded and made available to all staff. The staff meetings have a set agenda, with a clear focus on training. A good end-of-year summary document is produced by the managing director and presented to all staff. This includes key performance indicators and financial information, as well as a statement about staff-development activities and other significant developments during the year. It identifies key issues facing the company. An informative newsletter is distributed regularly to all staff and learners, as well as employers and work placements. The newsletter is also used as an effective means of celebrating the successful individual achievements of learners.

35. Doncaster GTA has links with many external agencies, including major motor vehicle manufacturers, local schools, local community groups and employers. These links have helped to increase the company's resources through substantial donations of good equipment, and provided the company with an income from the hiring of company facilities by these agencies.

36. Staff development has been effectively targeted to resolve weaknesses in the organisation, or skills gaps. Staff development is instigated by the annual staff appraisal process. Key staff have been trained in improved awareness of key skills and adult literacy and numeracy provision. Staff have achieved qualifications appropriate to their roles, which includes supervisory and management qualifications, as well as vocational awards and assessor and internal verifier qualifications. Staff development is evaluated after each event. Those staff attending external events share their information effectively with other staff.

37. A business plan and three-year development plan are written by the managing director. These are adequate for their purpose. The plans identify key objectives for the company and key staff development needs, as well as setting targets for recruitment and achievement in line with LSC contracts. The short-term targets for improvement in achievement are not sufficiently challenging and there are no targets for retention. The three-year plan contains seven organisational goals, all of which directly affect training. The one-year business plan is reviewed mid-period and identifies performance against LSC contracts, as well as target income for full-cost courses. The associated development plan identifies key activities and key dates for the company throughout the year. It is appropriately monitored and updated at the review period.

38. Strategies for the implementation and management of key skills training are weak. Key skills training has been introduced too late into the learners' training programmes. There is insufficient integration of key skills training with vocational training. The importance of key skills is not promoted sufficiently to learners and employers. A few learners have left programmes after achieving their NVQ but without the key skills qualification. Insufficient priority is given to key skills training within Doncaster GTA. Key skills are not covered sufficiently in learners' induction programmes. A new member of staff has been appointed recently, with responsibility for the delivery of the IT key skills and existing members of staff have attended key skills workshops to improve their knowledge.

39. Recent starters on all programmes have been assessed during their induction for literacy and numeracy abilities. Seventy-three per cent have been identified as requiring some support. No further diagnosis of identified needs takes place. The one member of staff responsible for delivery of support does not have relevant qualifications, other staff can only give general support.

40. Management information is not used effectively. Doncaster GTA monitors recruitment and achievement against its contractual targets, but does not effectively analyse trends, or identify key issues related to retention and achievement. Target-setting is not used effectively to raise retention and achievement rates. Employers' and learners' views are collected systematically and analysed, but the analysis is not sufficiently detailed. It does not provide an accurate identification of issues and does not lead to effective actions being taken. Equality of opportunity data are not collected.

Equality of opportunity

Contributory grade 3

41. Doncaster GTA has an adequate range of equal opportunities policies and procedures. These include specific policies on sexual harassment, for learners with additional learning needs, and disability discrimination. The equality of opportunity policy is included in the learners' induction, all learners receive a summarised copy of the policy and are made aware of where they can access the full policies and procedures. Learners have a good understanding of the complaints procedure and know the identity of the nominated staff member with responsibility for equality of opportunity. Complaints are clearly recorded and swiftly investigated. This results in appropriate actions being taken. A new e-learning package has recently been developed and

introduced to new learners. This reinforces and raises the learners' awareness of equality and diversity, and provides a good reference source for relevant legislation. The package effectively increases the cultural awareness of learners.

42. Equality of opportunity is not sufficiently monitored in the workplace. Some employers do not have policies for equality of opportunity and progress reviews do not focus sufficiently on equality of opportunity. Learners are treated fairly by staff, employers and other learners.

43. Doncaster GTA's learner profile is broadly representative of the local population. The company has been successful in increasing the number of men in business administration programmes. Although there is only a small number of women on motor vehicle programmes, there have been notable individual successes. One female learner on a vehicle paint spraying programme has been a finalist in one national qualification and won another national award.

Quality assurance

Contributory grade 4

44. Doncaster GTA has a quality assurance policy and a range of quality assurance procedures for training. However, the responsibility for quality assurance in the company is not clear. Quality assurance arrangements are inadequate to monitor performance and secure improvements. The audit of quality assurance activities does not sufficiently review or evaluate the key processes of learners, or their documentation. For example, there is no observation of progress reviews, to assure consistency and quality throughout the company. The audit focuses on compliance with contractual requirements, rather than serving as a means to improvement. Observations of training do take place, but there are inconsistencies in recording. Evidence recorded was, in many instances, insufficient to support the grades given. Lesson observations result in action plans for tutors. These action plans are not effectively monitored and are not used in the staff appraisal and development process.

45. Actions identified at meetings are not always effectively implemented or monitored. Some actions continue over several months without being successfully completed. For example, too few qualified staff for adult literacy and numeracy training was a point identified in a staff meeting in January 2002. A member of staff was identified and received basic awareness training. The self-assessment report in February 2003 identified that further training was required, but this has not been planned and remains a weakness at the time of the inspection.

46. The current self-assessment report was written in February 2003. It was produced in consultation with staff at staff meetings. The views of employers and learners were collected through questionnaires and considered for inclusion in the report. Some of the questions on the questionnaires are poorly designed. The responses do not provide useful information. Inspectors judgements matched many of those in the report, but found some of the strengths to be overstated and the report did not identify some key weaknesses. The grades awarded in the report were consistently higher than those given by inspectors. The accompanying development plan has not resolved all the identified

DONCASTER ROTHERHAM & DISTRICT MOTOR TRADES GTA LTD

weaknesses. For example, poor retention and achievement was identified as a weakness in the previous inspection report and in the self-assessment report, but actions to improve retention and achievement rates have not resulted in measurable improvement.

47. The internal verification system is satisfactory. The verification of portfolios of evidence is planned in advance, a planning chart ensures that learners are verified in all units. The assessors are observed in accordance with the plan. Learners' documents show evidence of internal verification activity. Verification is progressive; it ensures that evidence is of a satisfactory standard before the request for certificates. Verification is carried out on all engineering portfolios before the request for a full certificate.

AREAS OF LEARNING

Engineering, technology & manufacturing

Grade 4

Programmes inspected	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Work-based learning for young people	151	4

The following strengths and weaknesses were identified during this inspection:

Strengths

- good development of practical skills in the workplace
- very flexible assessment system

Weaknesses

- poor retention and achievement rates
- inadequate reinforcement of background knowledge
- insufficient awareness of modern apprenticeship framework by learners
- insufficient use of initial assessment to plan individual support

Achievement and standards

48. Retention and achievement rates are poor. The retention rate for advanced modern apprentices is approximately 50 per cent over the past five years. The foundation modern apprenticeship and NVQ programmes have retention rates of approximately 40 per cent.

49. Achievement rates for all programmes are poor. More specifically, the completion of advanced modern apprenticeships ranges from 3 per cent to 19 per cent during the period from 1997 to 2000. Over the past seven years, of 196 learners starting advanced modern apprenticeships, only 18 have completed the qualification and a further 38 remain in training. The completion rate for foundation modern apprentices is under 30 per cent for the same period. Over the past five years, 221 learners have started the programme, but only 11 have completed it, with a further 108 still in training. The NVQ learners have had achievement rates ranging from 25 to 29 per cent during the same period, with a more recent rise to over 50 per cent in the 2000-01 contract year. Over the past five years, 238 learners have started the NVQ programme, but only 56 have achieved the qualification and five are still in training.

50. Key skills delivery and assessment has recently improved; assessment is being integrated with the occupational assessments. For those learners who have been on the programme for a considerable period, key skills training has not been integrated and achievement of the qualifications has been poor.

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

LSC funded work-based learning																
Advanced modern apprenticeships (AMA)																
	2002-03		2001-02		2000-01		1999-2000		1998-99		1997-98		1996-97			
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number of starts	8		28		21		23		32		40		44			
Retained*	0		5		12		16	70	18	56	22	55	28	64		
Successfully completed	0		5		2		4	17	6	19	1	3	0	0		
Still in learning	8		23		7		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		

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

LSC funded work-based learning																
Foundation modern apprenticeships (FMA)																
	2003-04		2002-03		2001-02		2000-01		1999-2000		1998-99					
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number of starts			87		101		9		10		14					
Retained*			0		22		4		4	40	5	36				
Successfully completed			0		8		0		3	30	0	0				
Still in learning			66		39		3		0	0	0	0				

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

LSC funded work-based learning																
NVQ Training																
	2002-03		2001-02		2000-01		1999-2000		1998-99							
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number of starts	5		18		61		62		55							
Retained*	3		11		21	34	27	44	20	36						
Successfully completed	0		9		15	25	18	29	14	25						
Still in learning	3		2		0	0	0	0	0	0						

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

Quality of education and training

51. Learners develop good practical skills in the workplace. They are given frequent opportunities to acquire vocational skills. Many employers use personal mentors. All learners are placed with experienced technicians during their periods of training. Employers are fully aware of the skills training and assessment requirements of the relevant NVQ, and the tasks learners are required to perform. Employers provide ample opportunities for learners to acquire the necessary skills before formal assessment. Many

learners start their skills training at an early stage in their programmes. In one case a learner was able to carry out routine maintenance tasks unsupervised after one month. Some learners attain a high level of technical work after a short time on their programme. Learners are given ample opportunities to practise the range of tasks specified in their NVQ learning plans. Most employers have a copy of this plan. Individual learning plans are written for all learners. These are comprehensive, giving a full set of details of the learner and their programme. There is a clear identification of the learner's NVQ mandatory and optional units.

52. Learners are provided with a very responsive assessment service, which many of them use. Requests for assessment can be made at very short notice, which enables learners to take the opportunity for observed assessment as specific tasks arise in the workplace. Employers are fully aware of this service and often ensure that assessment requests are made by the learners. In many instances, assessors are able to start an assessment within 15 minutes of a telephone request being made. Where assessment opportunities are not available at a learner's workplace, suitable alternative arrangements are made at another location. Learners' progress is monitored effectively by assessors who endorse individual units as they are achieved. Internal verification is carried out when learners are claiming unit certification. Assessed work is comprehensively sampled, covering all learners, units and assessors. Assessors do not receive sufficient feedback about the outcomes of internal verification.

53. Teaching is satisfactory or better, with adequate planning and good delivery, but the reinforcement of background knowledge is inadequate. Tutors are enthusiastic and have a good knowledge of technology, they are able to relate background knowledge teaching to current technology, using clear examples. However, off-the-job training is mainly about theory, with a minimum of practical content. For example, after a series of lessons on chassis technology, a heavy goods vehicle learner has been given no practical experience of this aspect to support the background knowledge. Employers are not aware of the planned content, sequence or schedule of topics for off-the-job training. They are unable to link workplace activities to off-the-job training.

54. Doncaster GTA has sufficient numbers of trainers with good trade experience. Of the 10 training staff, seven have an assessor qualification and five have an internal verifier qualification. Most learners' workplaces are well equipped, with accessible, industry standard equipment. The provider has excellent training resources, but access for learners is limited. There are no resources at the provider's premises for motorcycle and heavy goods vehicle training. Learners on these programmes have no opportunity for their off-the-job training to be reinforced by practical activities while attending the training centre. Classroom facilities are appropriate. A range of lessons are being developed to be taught using IT.

55. Learners' progress reviews are satisfactory. Their progress through the NVQ is monitored weekly when they attend off-the-job training. Staff review learners' portfolios and draw up an action plan which gives target dates for the completion of activities in the workplace or for key skills qualifications. The targets given in these action plans are not always achieved, or closely monitored. A progress review of each learner is carried

out every 12 weeks. The review establishes how well the learner is progressing and identifies any specific actions required. Reviews are carried out systematically, but the comments are sometimes too generalised and do not focus on progress, or specific aspects of the learner's programme. Health and safety and equality of opportunity are briefly mentioned during reviews, but the reviewer does not confirm learners' understanding.

56. Learners are not aware of all the components of their modern apprenticeship framework. They all have a good knowledge of the NVQ, but only a very limited knowledge of key skills. Recently recruited learners have no knowledge of the technical certificate requirement of the framework. Employers are knowledgeable about the NVQ, but none of them know about the key skills component, or how on-the-job training can help with the assessment of key skills.

57. Initial assessment does not lead to effective support in literacy and numeracy. Improvements were made to the initial assessment of literacy and numeracy in July 2003. Starters on all programmes are now assessed during induction. A high proportion, 73 per cent, of these new starters have been identified as needing some support with literacy and numeracy. There is no further diagnosis of identified needs. The new assessment format has not been applied to learners who joined before July 2003. The member of staff with responsibility for the delivery of literacy and numeracy skills support does not have relevant qualifications. Some learners cannot access the detailed support that they require. For example, two learners had literacy support at school, but this has not been continued. Learners' IT ability is not assessed when they join the programme. Some learners at an advanced stage of technical training do not have access to computers. These learners are unable to progress with evidence collection for the IT key skills.

58. Some learners have gained additional qualifications, which include first aid, welding, airbag operation, air conditioning and lift-truck operation. The aim of the additional qualifications is to broaden learning beyond the NVQ and to increase learners' chances of gaining a job. The qualifications were available until March 2003 and it is intended to offer these in the future.

59. All learners reported that they have good, productive working relationships with training providers' staff. Learners feel well supported and know who to contact if they need any help.

Leadership and management

60. Internal verification is satisfactory. The verification of portfolios of evidence is planned in advance. Verification is progressive. It ensures that evidence is of a satisfactory standard before certificates are requested. Unit certificates are requested soon after they are achieved.

61. The self-assessment report for the area of engineering correctly identified issues relating to poor retention and achievement. It also correctly identified the assessment

opportunities and good work placements. Some judgements in the self-assessment report could not be substantiated by inspectors and they found further weaknesses that had not been identified.

62. Equality of opportunity is introduced during induction, but it is not reinforced during the programme. However, a learning package has been introduced recently, with the aim of re-emphasising equality of opportunity, and health and safety issues. This package has only been delivered to a small number of learners. Those learners who have received this package have some recollection and knowledge of equality of opportunity, but overall, the initiative has not had a sufficient effect on learners.

Business administration, management & professional**Grade 4**

Programmes inspected	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Work-based learning for young people	20	4

The following strengths and weaknesses were identified during this inspection:

Strengths

- good individual support in the training centre
- effective short-term target-setting for foundation modern apprentices

Weaknesses

- poor retention on foundation modern apprenticeship programme
- slow progress by advanced modern apprentices
- insufficient assessment by direct observation
- insufficient structured support for additional needs

Achievement and standards

63. The foundation modern apprentices remaining on the programme are making at least satisfactory progress and some are progressing well. Learners recruited last year started key skills training some time after the start of NVQ training and have therefore made less progress than with their NVQs. However, learners who started the programme this year have started key skills training at the same time as their NVQs and are making good progress.

64. The retention rate is poor on foundation modern apprenticeship programmes for the past two years. Of the 17 learners who started on the programme in 2001-02, nine completed the framework and two remain in training. However, only six of the 12 learners recruited in 2002-03 are still in training and, in the current year, eight learners have been recruited, four of whom have already left the programme.

65. Advanced modern apprentices make poor progress towards achievement of their frameworks. Some learners have made very slow progress with NVQ portfolios and most learners have made insufficient progress with key skills. Some learners who left the programme without completing their NVQs were given unit accreditation.

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

LSC funded work-based learning																
Advanced modern apprenticeships (AMA)																
	2002-03		2001-02													
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number of starts	4		7													
Retained*	0		0													
Successfully completed	0		0													
Still in learning	2		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																
Foundation modern apprenticeships (FMA)																
	2003-04		2002-03		2001-02		2000-01		1999-2000		1998-99					
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number of starts	8		12		17											
Retained*	0		0		12											
Successfully completed	0		0		9											
Still in learning	4		6		2											

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

LSC funded work-based learning																
NVQ Training																
	2002-03		2001-02		2000-01		1999-2000		1998-99							
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number of starts					23		20		8							
Retained*					13	57	13	65	4	50						
Successfully completed					13	57	13	65	4	50						
Still in learning					0	0	0	0	0	0						

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

Quality of education and training

66. Learners receive good support in the training centre. They attend day-release workshops with small groups and individual tuition. Teaching is of a good standard in the IT courses. All foundation modern apprentices complete a text-processing qualification and a number of e-learning packages. During portfolio-building sessions, learners are set clear targets by tutors, which are reviewed weekly. This helps learners to focus on the achievement of units at an early stage in their training. Learners are also

offered the opportunity to discuss other issues which may have arisen and they clearly value this link with their tutors. Learners are able to return full time to the training centre if their work placement is found to be unsuitable for them. They are given up to three weeks intensive training to prepare them for further opportunities.

67. Short-term target-setting is effective for foundation modern apprentices. Tutors visit learners in their workplaces every 12 weeks to review progress. Targets are set for learners and these targets are reviewed at the weekly day-release sessions. The progress reviews are satisfactory, although staff do not use them as an opportunity to discuss equal opportunities, or health and safety issues. Learners have an individual learning plan which has target dates for the achievement of all aspects of the framework. These plans are regularly updated.

68. Learners have access to appropriate resources in the training centre. They have a training room with computers and suitable peripheral equipment. They are able to access further, industry-standard packages in a second computer suite.

69. There is not enough assessment by direct observation. Learners who attend day release have most of their evidence assessed at the training centre, although this is almost exclusively work-based evidence. All advanced modern apprentices are visited only three times during the programme for assessment by observation. The session is used to gain evidence from whatever is happening on the day; it is difficult to plan and prepare for. Visits usually coincide with a progress review visit. Most foundation modern apprentices are visited in their workplace only once for assessment by observation. Advanced modern apprentices are visited more regularly and have their portfolio work assessed, but they do not have any more actual assessment by observation than foundation modern apprentices. Portfolios rely too much on product evidence.

70. Doncaster GTA does not provide sufficient structured support for learners with additional needs. Basic Skills Agency tests have recently been introduced to test learners during initial assessment and identify additional learning needs. Learners who were already on the programme have not completed these tests. Staff are able to help and support learners with general literacy problems, but have neither the training, nor the resources to support learners with more fundamental needs. For example, one learner is dyslexic, but there is nothing recorded on the recruitment details or the individual learning plan to indicate how support will be provided. There is no formal system in place to monitor or evaluate the support requirements for literacy and numeracy.

71. Key skills training has been introduced at a late stage in the programme for many learners. They are required to develop separate portfolios of evidence for NVQs and key skills. In some cases there is insufficient cross-referencing of evidence. Key skills work tends to be generated in the training centre, with learners preparing projects which are not related to their workplaces. Advanced modern apprentices do not attend the training centre for day release and have found key skills training particularly difficult. A series of key skills workshops developed to support these learners has not been well attended, learners have difficulty gaining permission to leave the workplace. Learners

have made some progress since a member of staff was appointed to prepare them for key skills tests.

72. Advanced modern apprentices make slow progress on their programmes. Doncaster GTA's staff work with employers to ensure that learners are in suitable employment or work placements, which are mainly associated with the motor trade. Recently, employers in estate agencies and travel agents have also offered placements. Employers are involved in the progress review process and show an interest in the learners' progress. However, few of them are knowledgeable about NVQs or aspects of modern apprenticeship framework requirements. Employers are reluctant to employ foundation modern apprentices until the end of the programme, only three of the current 12 learners are employed. Advanced modern apprentices do not attend the centre for day release. They do not have access to the support offered by tutors on a weekly basis.

Leadership and management

73. The business administration team works closely together to support learners. Staff have accurate job descriptions and are able to identify their own development needs during annual appraisals.

74. The internal verification system is satisfactory. There is a planning chart to ensure that learners are verified in all units. Assessors are observed in accordance with the plan. Learners' documents show evidence of internal verification.

75. Doncaster GTA has difficulties with retention on foundation modern apprenticeship programmes and achievement on advanced modern apprenticeship programmes. There is no evidence of a strategy to resolve these issues. Some employers do not have equal opportunities policies. Most learners have not discussed equality of opportunity with staff since their induction. The self-assessment report did not clearly define the role of the business administration unit. The programme's strengths and weaknesses were not accurately identified.