

INSPECTION REPORT

Humberside Engineering Training Association Limited

25 June 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

Humberside Engineering Training Association Limited

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INSPECTION REPORT

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROVIDER

1. Humberside Engineering Training Association Limited (HETA) was formed in 1967 as an employers' association to provide training to engineering companies in the Hull and East Riding area of Yorkshire. It traded successfully until the late 1990s, when it experienced serious financial problems. It was reformed in September 1999 and began operating under new management in January 2000. HETA is overseen by a board of directors from locally based international and large national engineering and manufacturing companies. The board and management are following a six-year development plan. HETA provides work-based training in engineering. Most learners are advanced modern apprentices but some learners who were recruited in previous years are taking level 3 national vocational qualifications (NVQs) only.

2. HETA has two training centres. Its headquarters are based in a wholly owned training centre in Hull that has capacity for 80 young people and 20 pupils aged 14 to 16. HETA has recently moved its Grimsby centre into a large engineering workshop at a well-known international chemical company. This centre also has capacity for 80 young people and 20 pupils aged 14 to 16. HETA employs 32 staff. Sixteen of these are directly involved in providing work-based learning for young people. The remainder provide support services or are involved in other training such as safety training. Day-to-day management is the responsibility of the chief executive and a senior management team consisting of the management accountant, the systems coordinator and two operations managers, one for Hull and one for Grimsby. The chief executive and senior management team are also responsible for achieving the objectives in HETA's business plan.

3. HETA serves Hull, Grimsby, north and northeast Lincolnshire and East Riding. Learners come from urban and rural areas on both banks of the Humber. In 2003, the proportion of school leavers achieving five or more general certificates of education (GCSEs) at grade C or above was 32.1 per cent in Hull, 51 per cent in the East Riding, 35.2 per cent in northeast Lincolnshire and 46.9 per cent in north Lincolnshire, compared with an average for England of 52.9 per cent. In May 2004, the unemployment rate was 5.2 per cent in Hull, 2 per cent in East Riding, 3.9 per cent in northeast Lincolnshire and 2.1 per cent in north Lincolnshire, compared with an average for England of 2.3 per cent. According to the 2001 census, the proportion of the population from minority ethnic groups was 2.3 per cent in Hull, 1.2 per cent in East Riding, 1.4 per cent in northeast Lincolnshire and 2.5 per cent in north Lincolnshire, compared with an average for England of 9.1 per cent.

SCOPE OF PROVISION

Engineering, technology & manufacturing

4. HETA has 169 learners in maintenance engineering, of whom 58 are working towards a level 2 NVQ and 111 are working towards a level 3 NVQ. There are 40 learners in manufacturing, of whom two are working towards a level 2 NVQ and 38 are working

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towards a level 3 NVQ. Five of the learners are women and two are from minority ethnic groups. No learners have been identified as requiring additional learning support or as having a disability. Learners are recruited into jobs with sponsoring employers. Off-the-job training is provided at HETA's two training centres. Training towards technical certificates is provided by HETA and local further education colleges, which learners attend on part-time day release. Key skills are taught by a subcontractor and HETA's staff. The key skills of working with others and improving own learning and performance are taught as part of a residential outdoor adventure course. On-the-job training is provided by employers. HETA's staff review learners' progress every four to six weeks. HETA provides training for 67 pupils from local schools. Seventeen of these are attending HETA as part of an initiative to increase flexibility in the education of 14 to 16 year olds. The remaining 50 are attending as part of an initiative by HETA to work with local schools.

ABOUT THE INSPECTION

Number of inspectors	6
Number of inspection days	24
Number of learner interviews	56
Number of staff interviews	23
Number of employer interviews	22
Number of subcontractor interviews	1
Number of locations/sites/learning centres visited	26
Number of visits	22

OVERALL JUDGEMENT

5. The quality of provision is adequate to meet the reasonable needs of those receiving it. More specifically, leadership and management and the approach to equality of opportunity are good. Quality assurance is unsatisfactory. Training in maintenance engineering and manufacturing is good.

GRADES

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

Leadership and management	2
Contributory grades:	
Equality of opportunity	2
Quality assurance	4

Engineering, technology & manufacturing		2
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
<i>Manufacturing</i> - Work-based learning for young people	40	2
<i>Other contributory areas</i> - Work-based learning for young people	169	2

KEY FINDINGS

Achievement and standards

6. **Learners' work is good.** Learners develop a broad range of suitable practical skills during their initial training at HETA. They develop relevant technical and analytical skills in the workplace.

7. **All learners take a range of suitable extra qualifications and training.** Most achieve extra units of the level 2 NVQ and many move on to take higher-level technician's qualifications.

8. **Retention and achievement rates have improved over the past few years and are now slightly above national averages.** A few learners take longer than expected to complete their frameworks, particularly in manufacturing. All learners are employed during their modern apprenticeships and a good proportion gain permanent employment on completing them.

9. **HETA monitors learners' attendance closely.** In the learning sessions observed by inspectors, attendance and punctuality were very good.

Quality of education and training

10. Of the 11 learning sessions observed, 91 per cent were satisfactory or better.

11. **Practical skills are taught well in HETA's workshops.** Employers value the initial training provided by HETA. Learners work on a wide range of projects in the workplace to develop their technical and analytical skills.

12. **HETA's training centres have good resources and a wide range of up-to-date equipment.** Classrooms are good in Hull and satisfactory in Grimsby. Information learning technology (ILT) is good, with up-to-date software for computer-aided drawing. HETA is adequately staffed. Staff who are not trained as teachers are working towards a teaching qualification.

13. **HETA has a very thorough process for recruiting modern apprentices on behalf of employers.** Parents, employers and schools are closely involved. Employers find that the process identifies suitable, committed staff for them. Although most of the modern apprentices have good GCSEs or even GCE 'A' levels, they are offered additional support with mathematics if they require it.

14. **Learners receive good support from HETA's staff and their employers.** HETA's assessors visit employers frequently to liaise with them and to carry out assessments and progress reviews. Workplace supervisors move learners from job to job so that they can gather the evidence they need for their NVQs. In their first year, all learners attend a residential outdoor training week. This is effective in building their team working and personal skills. HETA and learners' employers provide a wide range of extra training.

15. **Teaching and learning are satisfactory on the technical certificate course taught at HETA.** Most lesson plans include a suitable range of teaching and learning activities. Visual aids are used well in learning sessions. Some background knowledge sessions are not sufficiently challenging and fail to interest all learners. Some assignments use imaginative scenarios based on relevant engineering situations. Learners receive adequate written feedback on their assignments.

16. **HETA offers a satisfactory range of training in maintenance and manufacturing engineering that meets the needs of local industry.** It provides a wide range of short courses and has increased participation in engineering by pupils at local schools.

17. **Assessment for level 3 NVQs is satisfactory overall. However, there is not enough assessment by observation using accredited assessors.** Records of assessors' observations contain insufficient details of the activity and learners do not receive written feedback on their performance. There are some inconsistencies in internal verification across the two training centres. Some actions taken by internal verifiers are not fully recorded. When written evidence is sampled, this is not always recorded in the learner's portfolio.

Leadership and management

18. **HETA benefits from a very effective strategic management.** Since the previous inspection, it has introduced a more effective management structure. Engineering programmes have improved since the previous inspection. HETA has invested in new machinery and computer equipment and has expanded its training to serve a wider range of learners and employers.

19. **Good internal and external communications have brought about changes that have benefited learners.** Various meetings ensure that learners, staff and employers are kept fully informed about issues affecting HETA and its training. Good communication ensures that training matches the requirements of individual employers and their learners. Communication with employers has helped introduce recent improvements to the advanced modern apprenticeships.

20. **Staff appraisal and development are satisfactory.** Appraisals conclude by identifying requirements for development. This year staff development has had a suitable emphasis on teacher training. Other relevant training has been provided.

21. **HETA makes satisfactory use of management information.** It keeps readily available accurate data on learners and on its finances. It produces monthly reports on achievement of NVQs against target and distributes them widely. HETA records the proportion of learners who are women and the proportion who are from minority ethnic groups. This information is reported to staff and directors. HETA has recently introduced a new computerised management information system.

22. **HETA works successfully with a wide range of organisations to encourage greater participation in engineering.** It is involved in projects to recruit learners from under-represented groups and groups that are difficult to involve in training. Learners receive an initial training in equality of opportunity that is very effective. The learners interviewed by inspectors recalled the main points of this training well.

23. **HETA strongly promotes equality of opportunity.** Learners have a good understanding of their responsibilities and the support they can expect from HETA and their employers. Progress reviews are used to reinforce learners' understanding of equality of opportunity. Inappropriate behaviour is dealt with. Posters and photographs promoting equality of opportunity and celebrating learners' achievements are prominently displayed in HETA's premises.

24. **HETA has exceeded its target for recruiting learners from minority ethnic groups but has not met its targets for recruiting women and learners with disabilities.**

25. **Some staff with responsibility for reinforcing understanding of equality of opportunity at learners' progress reviews have not received enough training in current legislation and HETA's current policies.** Some important documents do not refer to relevant recent legislation.

26. **Self-assessment is satisfactory.** It involves staff, managers, board members and partners. However, the self-assessment report did not identify some of the strengths and weaknesses identified by inspectors, including important weaknesses in quality assurance and equality of opportunity.

27. **HETA does not have a comprehensive system to assure the quality of all the processes that affect learners.** Quality assurance was found to be a significant weakness at the previous inspection and HETA has been working to develop a complete quality assurance system. HETA has procedures for nearly all areas of its work. Quality assurance procedures for administration and management are more effective than those for teaching and learning. Inconsistencies between procedures have led to different standards being applied in different areas of HETA's work, particularly in assessment and internal verification.

Leadership and management

Strengths

- very effective strategic management
- good communications that bring about improvements
- good external links encouraging wider participation in training
- strong promotion of equality of opportunity

Weaknesses

- insufficient equality of opportunity training for some staff
- incomplete quality assurance system

Engineering, technology & manufacturing

Manufacturing

Strengths

- good development of engineering skills
- good achievement of extra qualifications and training
- good engineering and ILT resources
- very thorough selection and recruitment process
- good support for learners

Weaknesses

- some weak assessment and internal verification of level 3 NVQs

Other contributory areas

Strengths

- good development of engineering skills
- good achievement of extra qualifications and training
- good engineering and ILT resources
- very thorough selection and recruitment process
- good support for learners

Weaknesses

- some weak assessment and internal verification of level 3 NVQs

WHAT LEARNERS LIKE ABOUT HUMBERSIDE ENGINEERING TRAINING ASSOCIATION LIMITED:

- the good team spirit
- their good relationship with staff - 'we are treated as adults'
- the enjoyable training programme
- the equality of opportunity training from an external provider
- the regular reviews of their progress
- training which provides a good foundation for employment
- 'being able to have a go at everything'
- their well-organised and structured training
- the close support given by trainers
- the good introduction to the work environment

WHAT LEARNERS THINK HUMBERSIDE ENGINEERING TRAINING ASSOCIATION LIMITED COULD IMPROVE:

- its coverage of key skills in the first year
- the practical work set for learners - it could be more demanding
- the assessment paperwork - it could be reduced

KEY CHALLENGES FOR HUMBERSIDE ENGINEERING TRAINING ASSOCIATION LIMITED:

- introduce an effective quality assurance system
- provide further equality of opportunity training for staff

DETAILED INSPECTION FINDINGS

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Grade 2

Strengths

- very effective strategic management
- good communications that bring about improvements
- good external links encouraging wider participation in training
- strong promotion of equality of opportunity

Weaknesses

- insufficient equality of opportunity training for some staff
- incomplete quality assurance system

28. Since the previous inspection, HETA has introduced a more effective management structure. It now has a very effective strategic management. After experiencing financial problems a few years ago, the company focused on its core work of training advanced modern apprentices employed by international and large national companies. It has now achieved a stable financial position. The engineering programmes have improved since the previous inspection. HETA now has more staff and offers better support for learners. It has used its stable financial position to invest in new machinery and computer-based equipment. HETA has expanded its programmes to serve a wider range of learners and employers. It now provides training for learners with small and medium-sized companies and training for adults in areas such as health and safety. HETA recognises the need for further improvement and has identified clear goals for 2004-05.

29. Good internal and external communications have brought about changes that have benefited learners. Various meetings ensure that learners and staff are kept fully informed about issues affecting HETA and its training. These meetings cover HETA's performance in areas such as finance, the achievement of NVQs and the response to learners' feedback. Similar information is presented to employers through the board of directors and through a steering group of employers' operational staff. Employers are kept up to date about HETA and its modern apprenticeship programmes. Good communication ensures that training matches the requirements of individual employers and their learners. Communication with employers has helped introduce recent improvements to the modern apprenticeship programme such as new recruitment and selection procedures and the new training centre in Grimsby.

30. Staff appraisal and development are satisfactory. Staff are appraised every six months. HETA plans to introduce a new system of yearly appraisals linked to performance objectives. Appraisals conclude by identifying requirements for development. The main emphasis in staff development this year has appropriately been on teacher training, especially for staff teaching the technical certificates. Fifteen staff

have attended a course provided at HETA's premises by a local further education college. Other relevant training has included training in information technology (IT) to help staff use the newly installed computer network. One member of staff has been trained to carry out psychometric tests during the recruitment of learners and three staff are studying on programmes at degree level or NVQ level 4.

31. HETA makes satisfactory use of management information. It keeps readily available accurate data on learners and on its finances. It produces monthly reports showing the achievement of NVQs against target and distributes them widely. The reports are considered at meetings of directors, staff and employers and displayed prominently on noticeboards. HETA records the proportion of learners who are women and the proportion from minority ethnic groups and reports the information to staff and directors. It has recently introduced a new computerised management information system which provides easy access to common databases for staff at both sites. It has identified a need to make more effective use of this system.

32. Marketing is satisfactory. HETA promotes engineering and its work through a range of activities including careers fairs and industry days in schools. An enhanced marketing strategy has been developed to promote the broadening work of HETA.

Equality of opportunity

Contributory grade 2

33. HETA works with a wide range of organisations to encourage greater participation in engineering. It has close links with schools. A six-year development plan includes a clear plan for expanding the work with schools to recruit young people of all backgrounds. HETA is involved in projects to recruit learners from under-represented groups and groups that are difficult to involve in training. It carries out these initiatives through effective partnerships with bodies such as Connexions and organisations that promote links between education and business. HETA provides a wide range of workshops and school-based activities to recruit young people into science and engineering. It contracts a drama group to provide an effective equal opportunities awareness event early in learners' training. Learners interviewed by inspectors two to three years after this event had a good recollection of the main points covered. HETA encourages employers to promote equality of opportunity. However, its checks on employers are not detailed enough to ensure that they are promoting equality of opportunity and putting right any weaknesses in their approach.

34. HETA emphasises the importance of equality of opportunity. Learners have a good understanding of their responsibilities and the support that they can expect from HETA and their employers. A clear equal opportunities policy is publicised on noticeboards and in handbooks for learners and staff. Progress reviews are used to reinforce learners' understanding of equality of opportunity. Learners acknowledge the commitment to equality of opportunity shown by HETA's staff. Inappropriate behaviour is dealt with. Equality of opportunity is a standing agenda item at staff meetings and suitable records are kept of any discussion. HETA's classrooms and workshops are suitable for learners with disabilities. Both training centres have posters and photographs on display promoting equality of opportunity and celebrating learners' achievements. HETA

provides suitable materials on equality of opportunity for employers on request.

35. HETA has set itself targets for recruiting women, learners from minority ethnic groups and learners with disabilities. In 2003-04, 2.5 per cent of new learners were women, compared with a target of 5 per cent. HETA recruited no learners with disabilities, despite its target of 5 per cent. However, it exceeded its target of 2 per cent of new learners coming from minority ethnic groups, a proportion which exceeded the proportion of minority ethnic groups in the area HETA serves. HETA has set the same targets for 2004-05. HETA monitors the proportions of applications received from various groups. These are broadly similar to the proportions of successful applicants from those groups.

36. Some staff with responsibility for reinforcing understanding of equality of opportunity at learners' progress reviews have not received enough training in current legislation and HETA's current policies. Although many newly appointed staff do have current knowledge and experience, some longer-serving staff have not been regularly updated. Staff are referred at their inductions and through the staff handbook to HETA's current equal opportunities policy. However, this does not refer to all current legislation. For example, it does not mention the Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003 or the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000. Learners and staff are given a brief, undated statement of intent. This mentions only the Disability Discrimination Act 1995.

Quality assurance

Contributory grade 4

37. Self-assessment is satisfactory. It involves staff, managers, board members and partners. HETA uses a rating system to examine strengths and weaknesses. This is an effective way of involving all staff. The self-assessment report did not identify some of the strengths and weaknesses identified by inspectors, including important weaknesses in quality assurance and equality of opportunity. The self-assessment report gave the same grades for engineering and equality of opportunity as those given by inspectors. It gave a lower grade for leadership and management and a higher grade for quality assurance.

38. HETA does not have a comprehensive system to assure the quality of all processes that affect learners. Quality assurance was found to be a significant weakness at the previous inspection and HETA has been working to develop a complete quality assurance system. HETA has procedures for nearly all areas of its work. Many follow a common format and most have been incorporated into a quality assurance manual that is being produced. The quality assurance procedures for administration and management are more effective than those for teaching and learning. Staff are involved in assuring quality but records show that some procedures are not followed thoroughly or routinely. Inconsistencies between procedures lead to different standards being applied in different areas of HETA's work, particularly in its assessment and internal verification. HETA is making some use of quality assurance activities to secure improvements. For example, it is using questionnaires to record and evaluate learners' experiences. However, it is difficult to identify the processes by which improvements have been made and to evaluate the effectiveness of the quality assurance procedures. The introduction of the new management structure has led to a review of the quality assurance system. HETA

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intends to use IT to introduce a more thorough quality assurance system.

AREAS OF LEARNING

Engineering, technology & manufacturing

Engineering, technology & manufacturing		2
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
<i>Manufacturing</i> - Work-based learning for young people	40	2
<i>Other contributory areas</i> - Work-based learning for young people	169	2

Manufacturing

Strengths

- good development of engineering skills
- good achievement of extra qualifications and training
- good engineering and ILT resources
- very thorough selection and recruitment process
- good support for learners

Weaknesses

- some weak assessment and internal verification of level 3 NVQs

Other contributory areas

Strengths

- good development of engineering skills
- good achievement of extra qualifications and training
- good engineering and ILT resources
- very thorough selection and recruitment process
- good support for learners

Weaknesses

- some weak assessment and internal verification of level 3 NVQs

Achievement and standards

39. Learners produce good work during off-the-job training. They develop a broad range of suitable engineering skills during their initial training. This prepares them effectively for their on-the-job training. Learners produce good work in the workplace and develop useful technical and analytical skills. All learners take a range of extra qualifications and

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training. Most achieve extra units of the level 2 NVQ and many move on to take higher-level technician's qualifications.

40. Over the past few years, retention and achievement rates have improved for modern apprentices in maintenance engineering and manufacturing. They are now slightly above national averages. A few learners take longer than expected to complete their frameworks, particularly in manufacturing. All learners finish work on key skills before the end of their second year of training. Most finish this work during the first year of training. All learners are employed during their modern apprenticeships and a good proportion gain permanent employment on completing them.

41. As identified in the self-assessment report, HETA monitors learners' attendance closely. In the learning sessions observed by inspectors, attendance and punctuality were very good.

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)																
	2003-04		2002-03		2001-02		2000-01		1999-2000		1998-99		1997-98			
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number of starts	60		80		52		60		62		44		45			
Retained*	0		2	2	7	13	15	25	41	66	42	95	24	53		
Successfully completed	0		2	2	7	13	15	25	26	42	28	64	19	42		
Still in learning	59		74	92	33	63	24	40	8	13	6	14	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		1997-98			
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number of starts					22								3			
Retained*					17	77							2	67		
Successfully completed					17	77							2	67		
Still in learning					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																
	2003-04		2002-03		2001-02		2000-01		1999-2000		1998-99		1997-98			
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number of starts			4				7		4		1		14			
Retained*			0	0			4	57	2	50	1	100	6	43		
Successfully completed			0	0			3	43	2	50	1	100	5	36		
Still in learning			4	100			1	14	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

42. Practical skills are taught well in HETA's workshops. Learners are motivated by suitable practical activities. Employers value the initial training provided by HETA. Learners work on a wide range of projects in the workplace to develop their technical and analytical skills. They have carried out maintenance work in hazardous areas in petrochemical industries that require specialist health and safety training. Learners have also worked using advanced systems to control manufacturing processes.

43. HETA's training centres have good resources. Trainers make good use of a wide range of up-to-date equipment, including specialist equipment for testing materials and programmable logic controllers. Classrooms at the training centre in Hull provide a good environment for teaching and learning. Classrooms at the new training centre in Grimsby are satisfactory. Practical resources to develop basic engineering skills include modern computer numerical control manufacturing equipment for mechanical engineering and printed circuit board production equipment for electronic engineering. HETA has good ILT resources. Laptop computers connected through a wireless network are used flexibly at various locations across HETA's sites. These are used for general IT and access to the internet. They are also loaded with specialist engineering software. HETA's computer-aided drawing facility has up-to-date software. HETA is adequately staffed. It has an adequate number of suitable assessors and internal verifiers. Staff who teach the technical certificate who are not teacher trained are working towards a teaching qualification.

44. HETA has a very thorough process for recruiting modern apprentices on behalf of employers. Parents, employers and schools are closely involved. HETA briefs prospective learners and their parents thoroughly so that they understand the training process and the commitment expected of them. Potential learners take a wide range of tests over an extended period. Learners receive feedback at each stage. HETA shortlists learners for interviews with employers. Employers find that the process identifies suitable, committed staff for them.

45. Learners receive good support from HETA's staff and their employers. Most

employers provide structured training programmes and mentors for their learners. HETA's assessors visit employers frequently to liaise with them and to carry out assessments and progress reviews. Reviews of learners' progress take place in the workplace every four to six weeks and are usually attended by workplace supervisors and managers. The reviews are satisfactory but learners are not always set demanding short-term targets. Most employers allow learners to complete their logbook entries while they are at work. Workplace supervisors move learners from job to job so that they can gather the evidence they need for their NVQs. First-year learners receive a free textbook. Learners who need it receive extra tuition in mathematics at the training centres. Learners in maintenance have opportunities to gain extra skills in basic machining and bench fitting. In their first year, all learners attend a residential outdoor training week. This is effective in building their team working and personal skills. Learners also use the week to gather evidence of their key skills. HETA provides good opportunities for extra training and development. These include industrial visits, free registration with an engineers' professional organisation and training in drug awareness. Extra training offered by employers includes training in instrumentation, training in programmable logic controllers, site-specific health and safety training and training in equality of opportunity.

46. Teaching and learning are satisfactory on the technical certificate course taught at HETA. Most lesson plans include a suitable range of teaching and learning activities. However, some lesson plans and schemes of work are insufficiently detailed. Visual aids are used well in learning sessions. For example, up-to-date videos cover health and safety. Overhead transparencies are useful and easy to read. Some background knowledge sessions fail to interest all learners. Laptop computers are used well during learning sessions, especially in electronics, and good use is made of the internet for scientific research. Some assignments are well presented and use imaginative scenarios based on relevant engineering contexts. Grading criteria are clearly identified. Learners receive adequate written feedback on their assignments.

47. HETA offers a satisfactory range of training in maintenance and manufacturing engineering that meets the needs of local industry. It provides short courses in health and safety, programmable logic controllers, pneumatics and electrical wiring regulations. The company has increased participation in engineering by pupils at local schools. At both sites, school pupils study part time towards GCSEs in engineering.

48. Some assessment practice is weak for level 3 NVQs. This was identified as a weakness in the self-assessment report. Assessment is satisfactory overall and takes into account the individual learner's progress. However, there is not enough assessment by direct observation using qualified assessors. Many learners are observed by technically competent colleagues who complete HETA's assessment paperwork. Records of observations contain insufficient details of the activity and learners do not receive written feedback on their performance. Learners answer written questions to test their background knowledge. Some answers are wrong and some lack detail. There are some inconsistencies in internal verification across the two training centres. One training centre has a written strategy for internal verification but this does not refer to all the assessors that are being used. The internal verification sampling plan does not reflect the

strategy. Most assessors are suitably observed carrying out work-based assessments but the feedback they receive on this work does not always explain how they can improve. Some actions taken by internal verifiers are not fully recorded. When written evidence is sampled, this is not always recorded in the learner's portfolio.

Leadership and management

49. The programmes are well managed. HETA uses resources effectively throughout the learning process. Communications are good within HETA and with employers. Staff meet frequently. HETA keeps employers informed of learners' progress and attendance. Employers visit learners regularly during their off-the-job training. HETA invites employers to social events, award ceremonies and presentations by the awarding body on the curriculum. Employers value the support HETA gives to learners. Managers meet to set and review targets for completing the modern apprenticeship framework. Staff development is satisfactory. Learners receive memorable training in equality of opportunity during induction. This is reinforced at progress reviews. Learners show a good understanding of equality of opportunity. Quality assurance arrangements are inadequate and procedures are not always followed. HETA is failing to assure the quality of internal verification and assessment.