

INSPECTION REPORT

The JGA Group

04 December 2003



ADULT LEARNING
INSPECTORATE

THE JGA GROUP

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.

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INSPECTION REPORT

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROVIDER

1. The JGA Group (JGA) is a private training and development company which specialises in career management and development. It was founded in 1991 and in April 2003 it became a limited liability company. JGA provides Executive Challenge, a jobsearch programme for unemployed managers, professionals and mature graduates. The programme includes jobsearch skills, self-marketing and networking, in-company project placements, individual counselling and confidence building. The programme also includes self-employment and portfolio career options. Work-based learning for adults and New Deal 25+ Jobcentre Plus programmes are funded through contracts with the Berkshire District and the Brent, Harrow & Hillingdon District of Jobcentre Plus. Programme contracts are for six-week short job-focused training (SJFT), 13-week and 20-week longer occupational training (LOT), and 26-week intensive activity period (IAP) training. JGA is based in the west London borough of Hillingdon and recruits clients from a wide geographical area covering greater London and substantial parts of southeast England.

2. JGA has 12 office staff in addition to the managing director, and a bank of approximately 24 associate consultants who work as tutors and personal advisers. The jobsearch programme is delivered in four venues: Ickenham, close to the JGA office; London Bridge/Southwark in south-central London; Bracknell; and Reading, both to the west of London. Individual interviews with clients are also held in JGA's offices and in other locations such as jobcentres. According to the 2001 census, the proportion of the population from minority ethnic groups is 28.8 per cent in London and 2.3 per cent in the Southeast, compared with 9.1 per cent nationally. In Bracknell it is 4.9 per cent and in Reading it is 13.2 per cent.

SCOPE OF PROVISION

Foundation programmes

3. There are 132 clients following the jobsearch programme. Of these, 17 are on the six-week SJFT programme, 89 are on the 13-week and 20-week LOT programmes and 26 are on the 26-week IAP programme. Of the 132 clients, 50 are from minority ethnic groups and 23 are women. All clients are over the age of 25 and seven have a declared disability. Clients have varied employment backgrounds but all have had managerial or professional experience. Currently, approximately 70 per cent have worked in information technology (IT). All clients take part in the core programme which lasts for the first six weeks. During this time they attend two workshops each week. They work on four activities: a personal record of achievement; a curriculum vitae; a practice interview; and a jobsearch report. Each client also meets on a weekly basis with a JGA appointed personal adviser. Clients on the six-week SJFT programme work towards the completion of their personal record of achievement and their curriculum vitae. Clients on programmes longer than six weeks attend a further series of weekly workshops and work

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towards achieving a certificate in **continuing professional** development. When not attending workshops or personal adviser interviews, clients are expected to work on their four activities and carry out networking and jobsearch activities for a total of 30 hours each week. They are required to submit a diary of their activities. Clients on training programmes longer than six weeks can opt to spend a period of up to eight weeks in a work placement.

ABOUT THE INSPECTION

Number of inspectors	4
Number of inspection days	16
Number of learner interviews	55
Number of staff interviews	20
Number of employer interviews	3
Number of locations/sites/learning centres visited	6

OVERALL JUDGEMENT

4. The quality of provision is adequate to meet the reasonable needs of those receiving it. More specifically, JGA's leadership and management are satisfactory, as is its approach to equality of opportunity and quality assurance. The quality of the Jobcentre Plus-funded training is satisfactory.

GRADES

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

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

Foundation programmes	3
Contributory grades:	
New Deal 25+ and work-based learning for adults	3

KEY FINDINGS

Achievement and standards

5. **Retention rates are good on all programmes.** The proportion of clients who successfully complete all aspects of their planned learning programme is satisfactory. The proportion of clients who get a job on leaving their programme is just below

Jobcentre Plus targets on a number of contracts. It is satisfactory on some programmes but less than satisfactory on other programmes. The standard of completed personal records of achievement is generally good. A business plan produced by a client for a company following a work placement was of a very good standard.

Quality of education and training

Grades awarded to learning sessions

	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Total
Foundation programmes	0	0	1	3	0	0	0	4
Total	0	0	1	3	0	0	0	4

6. **The programmed workshops provide good support for clients.** The contents are relevant to jobsearch. The workshops help clients to structure their week, build up their confidence and promote a disciplined approach to their jobsearch. They also provide an opportunity for clients to share experiences and to discuss issues of common concern. The workshops are held in rooms which provide a good learning environment. The individual workshops have clearly defined aims and learning outcomes which are shared with clients. In the workshops observed, the teaching was generally satisfactory, although some of the content was insufficiently challenging.

7. The preparation of their personal record of achievement allows clients to effectively recall and reflect on prior achievements, identify skills which they feel are best developed, and prepare a clear action plan to help them back into employment. Clients are given good support from the personal advisers during this process. The standard of the finished records seen was generally good with clear plans of action for the future.

8. The learning resources for the programme are generally satisfactory. They include a range of videos, books and journals. Staff qualifications and commercial experience are satisfactory. For jobsearch activities, clients are expected to work from home and use domestic internet facilities and other materials, including newspapers.

9. The monitoring of client progress is satisfactory. The production of assignments is closely checked by the clients' personal adviser. Targets are set to complete assignment tasks within an agreed time. Clients' progress is also monitored and assessed during workshop sessions by the tutor and fellow clients.

10. **There are insufficient strategies to meet the varied needs of the expanding client group.** Clients attending workshops have held positions at various levels in public and private sector organisations. Many of the current clients have highly specialised IT backgrounds. The content of the programme does not always meet the needs of such a wide range of clients.

11. The resources available are not always used effectively to support the clients' return to work. Some learning materials used in workshop sessions do not support the development of current skills such as presentation and interview skills. Few clients make use of the work-placement opportunities to update their work experience or to

demonstrate new skills and knowledge.

Leadership and management

12. **There has been good business planning to support a wider range of clients.** The number of clients has increased significantly over the past two years and the range of clients has broadened. The number of workshop venues is increasing to make them more accessible to prospective clients. Management structures are being reviewed and changed to match the increasing workload. New staff have been recruited. However, the jobsearch programme has not been adapted sufficiently to meet the needs of the large number of clients with employment backgrounds in the IT industry.

13. **There is a clear direction for the future of the company.** JGA is expanding its publicly funded work. It is moving to new premises to better meet the needs of its expanding workload.

14. The use and provision of management information is satisfactory. Suitable systems monitor client progress and achievements as well as progress against contractual targets. Reports are produced regularly. A database of possible work-placement providers is maintained. The data systems are being developed further to analyse the client group in relation to equal opportunities data.

15. **JGA is exceeding its recruitment targets but is not achieving its job outcome targets.** The main company targets relate to contract compliance. Achievement of these targets and of further contributory monthly targets is monitored closely.

16. Communications are satisfactory. The progress of clients is discussed at most meetings. Health and safety and equal opportunities are regular agenda items. Meetings between the tutors and personal advisers are an appropriate mix of administrative matters and workshops to improve the skills of tutors and advisers. Communication with clients is not always effective.

17. JGA uses the initial assessment interviews to effectively identify clients requiring support for literacy, numeracy and language skills. JGA has access to a specialised basic skills unit but has not needed to refer any clients to this unit. Where necessary, practical help is provided by JGA staff.

18. Staff appraisal is satisfactory. Development needs are identified where required. In 2002, the company was reaccredited with the Investors in People award, a national standard for improving an organisation's performance through its people.

19. **JGA provides good pastoral support for its range of clients.** Staff work effectively and sensitively with individual clients to provide support. Personal advisers play a key role in the support of clients and maintain effective contact with them.

20. All clients receive an adequate induction for equality of opportunity. Staff training in equality and diversity is carried out through the frequent team meetings. Workshops are

beginning to be monitored for equality of opportunity issues. Care is taken to ensure that training materials do not present stereotypes. However, the images used in the client handbook are predominately of white men. Clients and staff have a good understanding of the complaints procedure. Complaints are dealt with promptly and the details are well recorded. JGA uses four different workshop venues in and around London. Each venue is accessible by clients who have restricted mobility. One venue was changed recently to provide better access.

21. **JGA's use and analysis of equal opportunities data are inadequate.** JGA has only recently started to analyse and use data on clients' age, gender, ethnicity and disabilities.

22. **JGA makes good use of client feedback to improve the jobsearch programme.** Senior staff evaluate the feedback and detailed actions are identified. Client feedback is used constructively to support the continuous improvement of the programme. Client feedback has identified the need to make some workshops more relevant to clients' individual jobsearch needs.

23. The self-assessment action plan is satisfactory. It has clear links to the self-assessment report. The actions contained within the plan are specific and sufficiently detailed. Implementation of the planned actions is monitored effectively. The majority of the planned actions have been completed.

24. **JGA's arrangements for quality assurance are incomplete.** JGA has detailed procedures for many of its activities but the quality assurance policy and its associated procedures have been produced only recently. The quality assurance manual is not yet complete. The existing procedures are monitored adequately, although there is no system for formally auditing them. Self-assessment is not a continuous process. The current self-assessment is the first report JGA has produced against the 'Common Inspection Framework'. Client feedback was used effectively as part of the self-assessment process. Staff were actively involved in the development process.

The following strengths and weaknesses were identified during this inspection:

Leadership and management

Strengths

- good business planning to support client group
- good support for clients
- effective use of feedback from clients in improving the return to work programme

Weaknesses

- inadequate use and analysis of equality of opportunity data
- incomplete arrangements for quality assurance

Foundation programmes

Strengths

- good retention rates
- good support for clients through programmed workshops
- good personal records of achievement

Weaknesses

- insufficient strategies to meet the clients' varied employment needs
- insufficient use of some resources to support clients' return to work

WHAT LEARNERS LIKE ABOUT THE JGA GROUP:

- the good opportunities for networking
- the emphasis on the importance of the work ethic
- the useful sessions with their personal adviser
- the opportunities to explore their wider skills and attributes

WHAT LEARNERS THINK THE JGA GROUP COULD IMPROVE:

- the content of some workshop sessions - they should be at a more advanced level
- the amount of paperwork at start of programme - it should be reduced

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KEY CHALLENGES FOR THE JGA GROUP:

- develop further strategies to meet the varied employment needs of clients
- develop the use and analysis of equality of opportunity data
- further improve the quality assurance arrangements

DETAILED INSPECTION FINDINGS

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Grade 3

The following strengths and weaknesses were identified during this inspection:

Strengths

- good business planning to support client group
- good support for clients
- effective use of feedback from clients in improving the return to work programme

Weaknesses

- inadequate use and analysis of equality of opportunity data
- incomplete arrangements for quality assurance

25. There has been good business planning to support a wider range of clients. The number of clients has increased significantly over the past two years. The range of clients has been broadened and now includes a significant proportion from the IT industry. JGA has recently opened a new learning venue and plans to open a further venue so that the centres are more accessible to prospective clients. Management structures are being reviewed and changed to match the increasing workload. The management of programmes is satisfactory. The administration of courses in their various locations is satisfactory. New staff have been recruited, some with direct experience of the Executive Challenge programme. Despite the increased number of clients, the levels of retention and achievement have been maintained. However, the jobsearch programme has not been adapted sufficiently to meet needs of the large number of clients who have employment backgrounds in the IT industry.

26. There is a clear direction for the future of the company. JGA is expanding its publicly funded work. It has recently obtained a number of new contracts from two local Learning and Skills Councils to work with small and medium-sized enterprises and offer initial advice and guidance for individuals, and national vocational qualifications for company staff. It is moving its main office to new premises to meet the needs of its expanding workload.

27. The use and provision of management information is satisfactory. In the past two years, JGA has developed its own data management systems. Suitable systems have been developed to record clients' progress and achievements, as well as to monitor progress against contractual targets. Reports, such as those on client attendance, are produced regularly. The clients' achievement of their four key milestones in the first six weeks of their programme is monitored closely. A database of possible work-placement providers is maintained. The data systems are being developed further to analyse the client group in relation to equal opportunities data.

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28. JGA is exceeding its recruitment targets but is just below its job outcome targets. The main company targets relate to contract compliance. Achievement of these targets is monitored closely. Further contributory monthly targets are displayed prominently in the main administration office. These targets relate to aspects such as the number of clients who complete their personal record of achievement and the number of personal adviser interviews. Monthly reports on the achievement of these targets are distributed to office staff, tutors and personal advisers.

29. Communication is satisfactory. Office staff meet every two weeks. Regular agenda items include brief points relating to health and safety and equal opportunities. The progress of clients is discussed at most meetings. Tutors and personal advisers meet three times each year. Meetings are an appropriate mix of administrative matters and workshops to help improve the skills of tutors and advisers. Newsletters provide suitable information on the performance of the company and items relating to improving standards on the programme. However, communication with clients is not always effective. Responses to some clients questions and/or queries are slow. Clients do not always receive notification of changes to workshops in sufficient time.

30. JGA does not formally test the clients' initial levels of literacy and numeracy following their referral from Jobcentre Plus. The initial assessment interview is used to check if there are any identified needs. The personal record of achievement also helps to identify whether clients require extra support. JGA has access to a specialised basic skills unit but has not needed to refer any clients to this unit. Where necessary, practical help is provided by JGA staff. Clients who speak English as a second language are referred to local specialist providers for language support.

31. JGA operates three types of relevant staff appraisal. Office staff are appraised annually through an interview with their line manager. Personal advisers are appraised through a self-evaluation process and a discussion with an external consultant. Course tutors are appraised through observation of their tutoring and a discussion with an external consultant. In all cases, development needs are identified where required. A comprehensive learning plan has been drawn up for the office staff. The workshops which take place as part of the staff forum meetings are arranged to meet the needs identified during the personal adviser and tutor appraisal processes. The company was reaccredited with the Investors in People award in 2002, which is a national standard for improving an organisation's performance through its people.

Equality of opportunity

Contributory grade 3

32. JGA provides good individual support for clients to help them return to work. This was identified in the self-assessment report. Some members of staff were previously clients on the programme and have a very good understanding of the programme's aims and objectives. Staff work effectively and sensitively with individual clients to help them back into work, especially older clients, giving practical help and encouragement when necessary. Clients appreciate the level of support provided by all staff. Some clients who have completed the programme continue to be involved, for example, as a guest speaker. Personal advisers have a key role in helping clients back into work and they

maintain close contact with them. JGA operates a flexible approach to the operation of this support. For example, where the matching of client and personal adviser is not successful, arrangements are made for a different adviser to be allocated. Additional time for clients' meetings with their personal adviser is also arranged where necessary.

33. All clients receive an adequate induction for equality of opportunity. Although there is not a separate client policy for dealing with bullying and harassment, the induction and workshop sessions stress the importance of appropriate behaviour and treating others with respect. Staff training in equality and diversity is carried out through the frequent team meetings, with equality of opportunity as an agenda item at every meeting. Workshops are now monitored for equality of opportunity issues. JGA take care to ensure that training materials do not present stereotypes. For example, the names in case studies are selected to reflect either gender. However, the images used in the client handbook are predominately of white men. Employers used for work placements are required to sign an agreement that they have, or are working towards, an equal opportunities policy, although this information is not checked. The grievance and complaints procedure is satisfactory. Information on the procedure is clearly written and is given to clients in their programme handbook. Staff are provided with similar information in the staff handbook. Clients and staff have a good understanding of the complaints procedure. Complaints are dealt with promptly and the details are well recorded.

34. JGA uses four different venues in and around London for its workshops. Each venue is accessible by clients who have restricted mobility. One venue was adapted recently to provide better access. Access to JGA's main office is restricted by a steep and narrow stairway. A more accessible room at the rear of the building can be used if required. JGA is moving its main office to a building with better access facilities.

35. JGA's use and analysis of equal opportunities data are inadequate. This was partly recognised in the self-assessment report. JGA has only recently started to use and analyse data on clients' age, gender, ethnicity and disabilities. For example, there has been no analysis of data on age, gender or ethnicity and disabilities to make comparisons between the different programmes or locations relating to the clients' achievements or progression into employment.

Quality assurance

Contributory grade 3

36. JGA makes good use of feedback from clients to improve the jobsearch programme. This strength was identified in the self-assessment report. All clients have the opportunity to evaluate each workshop session they attend. On completion of the jobsearch programme, clients are also invited to evaluate their whole experience. Well-designed feedback forms are used for both types of feedback. Senior staff monitor carefully the responses received and detailed actions are identified. For example, the order of the programme has been changed, with a workshop on stress management positioned earlier in the programme, and a new workshop on employment in the public sector has been introduced. Feedback from clients is used constructively to support the continuous improvement of the programme through discussions at the team and staff

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meetings. Feedback from clients has identified the need to make some workshops more relevant to their individual jobsearch needs.

37. The self-assessment action plan is satisfactory. It has clear links to the self-assessment report. The actions in the plan are specific and sufficiently detailed. Each action has an identified owner and dates for its completion. Implementation of the planned actions is monitored effectively. Progress has been made on most planned actions, although some of the completion dates have been extended. The majority of the actions identified in the plan have been completed.

38. JGA's arrangements for quality assurance are incomplete. JGA has detailed procedures for many of its activities relating to the jobsearch programme. For example, there are detailed procedures for recruiting clients, for the administration of clients' personal files, for the work of personal advisers and for the financial procedures of the company. However, the quality assurance policy and its associated procedures have been produced only recently and the quality assurance manual is not yet complete. Monitoring of the existing procedures is adequate. For example, a member of the senior staff attends every induction to check the induction procedures are carried out correctly and discussions at team meetings reinforce and update staff understanding of procedures. However, there is no system for formally auditing procedures. Observation of teaching is in its first year of operation and not all tutors have been observed. Self-assessment is not a continuous process. The previous self-assessment report was produced three years ago. The current self-assessment is the first report JGA has produced against the 'Common Inspection Framework'. Client feedback was used effectively in the self-assessment process and members of staff were actively involved in the development of the report.

AREAS OF LEARNING

Foundation programmes

Grade 3

Programmes inspected	Number of learners	Contributory grade
New Deal 25+ and work-based learning for adults	132	3

The following strengths and weaknesses were identified during this inspection:

Strengths

- good retention rates
- good support for clients through programmed workshops
- good personal records of achievement

Weaknesses

- insufficient strategies to meet the clients' varied employment needs
- insufficient use of some resources to support clients' return to work

Achievement and standards

39. Retention rates are good on all programmes. This strength was recognised in the self-assessment report. For example, in 2001-02 and 2002-03, the retention rates were 91 per cent and 93 per cent, respectively, on the SJFT programmes. In 2001-02, the retention rate was 91 per cent on the 13-week LOT programme and 87 per cent on the 26-week IAP programme.

40. The percentage of clients who successfully complete all aspects of their planned learning programme is satisfactory. There are variations between the programmes, ranging from 62 per cent in 2001-02 on the 13-week LOT programme to 36 per cent in 2002-03 on the SJFT programme.

41. The percentage of clients who start employment on leaving their programme is just below Jobcentre Plus targets on a number of contracts. The percentage starting jobs is satisfactory on some programmes, such as the 20-week LOT programme in 2001-02, at 48 per cent. On some it is unsatisfactory, such as the 26-week IAP programme in 2001-02, at 15 per cent. Examples of recent job outcomes include employment as a technical sales manager, a test engineer, a business analyst, a commercial systems manager and a principal software engineer.

42. Completed personal records of achievement are generally good. A business plan produced by a client for a company following a work placement was of a very good standard.

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The following table shows the achievement and retention rates available up to the time of the inspection.

Jobcentre Plus funded programmes																	
New Deal 25+ and work-based learning for adults	2003-04		2002-03		2001-02												
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
	Number of starts	166		419		251											
Retained*	30		354	84	221	88											
Planned learning completed	26		228	54	146	58											
Gained job	26		125	30	85	34											
Still in training	120		12	3	0	0											

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

Quality of education and training

43. The programmed workshops provide good support for clients. This strength was identified in the self-assessment report. The contents are relevant to jobsearch and cover topics such as stress control, interview techniques and presentation skills. The requirement to attend and the assignments associated with the workshops help clients to structure their week, to build up their confidence and to promote a disciplined approach to their jobsearch. The workshops also provide an opportunity for clients to share experiences and discuss issues of common concern. The workshops are held in rooms which provide a good learning environment. Appropriate audiovisual equipment is available to aid teaching. The individual workshops are structured with clearly defined aims and learning outcomes which are shared with clients at the start of each workshop. In the workshops observed, the teaching was generally satisfactory, although some of the content was insufficiently challenging.

44. Clients prepare a personal record of achievement and find it a very useful exercise. The record provides a clear plan of action for clients to help them back into employment. The record is prepared by a client during the first six weeks of their programme and is used to recall and reflect on prior achievements, identify skills which they feel are best developed, and prepare an action plan for both personal and career development. Personal advisers give clients good support during this process. Personal advisers expect clients to achieve an appropriate standard and offer them close support and feedback while they work on their records. The finished records were generally good with clear plans of action for the future.

45. Satisfactory learning resources for jobsearch and the workshops are available at the Ickenham office. They include a range of videos, books and journals. Some workshop tutors provide their own materials, including videos. Staff qualifications and commercial

experience are satisfactory. For jobsearch activities, clients are expected to work from home and use domestic internet facilities and other materials, including newspapers. Most of the current client group have access to the internet. Those who do not have access can book time on JGA's computers in Ickenham or use public facilities such as those in libraries.

46. The monitoring of clients' progress is satisfactory. The production of assignments related to the four activities is closely checked by the clients' personal adviser. Meetings with advisers are recorded and targets are set to complete assignment tasks within an agreed time. Clients' progress is also monitored and assessed during workshop sessions by the tutor and fellow clients. For clients in work placements, contact with personal advisers is maintained by telephone and visits. At the start of their programme, clients receive a handbook containing copies of relevant policy statements, including JGA's equal opportunities policy. The handbook also provides advice and guidance on the required elements of the programme, including the personal achievement record.

47. JGA does not formally test clients' initial levels of literacy and numeracy following referrals by Jobcentre Plus. The initial assessment interview carried out by JGA staff is used to check if there are any identified needs. The weekly interviews with personal advisers and attendance at workshops may also identify the requirement for further support. JGA has access to a specialised basic skills unit but has not needed to refer any clients to this unit. Where necessary, practical help is provided by JGA staff. For example, personal advisers have helped clients with their spelling during the production of their personal record of achievement. Clients who speak English as a second language are referred to local specialist providers for language support.

48. There are insufficient strategies to meet the varied needs of the expanding client group. Clients attending workshops have held various positions at all levels within public and private sector organisations. Some have operated at board level, while others have controlled substantial budgets or managed complex technological projects. Currently, approximately 70 per cent of clients attending the programme have an IT background, many of whom have highly specific technological skills. The content of the programme does not always meet the needs of such a wide range of clients. Clients question the relevance of some of the workshops in meeting their individual needs, although they recognise the broader value of some of the activities in helping them to prepare for their jobsearch.

49. The available resources are not always used effectively to support the clients' return to work. Some learning resources used in the workshops do not demonstrate current best practice in skill areas relating to, for example, presentation and interview skills. The opportunity to obtain a work placement is offered by JGA. However, few clients make use of this valuable facility to update their work experience and to demonstrate new skills and knowledge. At the time of the inspection, only eight clients were on work placements.

Leadership and management

50. The management of the jobsearch programme is satisfactory. Tutors and personal advisers are clear about their roles and responsibilities. Tutor and personal adviser meetings discuss the future direction of the company and issues affecting staff and clients. Communications with clients are not always effective. Tutors and personal advisers are involved in the self-assessment process. The recently introduced observation of workshops is effective in developing tutors. Feedback from clients on the programme's content is evaluated and suitable actions are implemented.