

INSPECTION REPORT

John Laing Training Limited

04 March 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

John Laing Training Limited

Contents

Summary

Description of the provider	1
Scope of provision	1
About the inspection	2
Overall judgement	2
Grades	2
Key findings	2
What learners like about John Laing Training Limited	5
What learners think John Laing Training Limited could improve	5
Key challenges for John Laing Training Limited	6

Detailed inspection findings

Leadership and management	7
Equality of opportunity	8
Quality assurance	9
Construction	12

INSPECTION REPORT

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROVIDER

1. John Laing Training Limited (JLT) is a subsidiary of John Laing Partnership Limited. JLT was set up in 1987 and has training centres in north and east London at Newham (Royal Docks Campus), Hackney and Edmonton. It offers training funded by Jobcentre Plus in brickwork, carpentry and joinery, dry lining, painting and decorating, and plastering. North London Learning and Skills Council (LSC) funds training in foundation modern apprenticeships. Each training centre has a basic skills group, to help those who have severe barriers to achieving employment move onto a structured programme of training and support. JLT also offers training for a small number of foundation modern apprenticeships, and a range of taster and supplementary courses in construction crafts and information technology (IT) skills.

2. The chairman, managing director, operations director, financial controller and company secretary make up JLT's senior management team. The operations director and financial controller are responsible for cross-centre management. Each training centre has a business manager who is responsible for the day-to-day management of the training along with the tutors. JLT has 52 staff.

SCOPE OF PROVISION

Construction

3. There are 126 clients on New Deal 25+ and work-based learning for adults, following longer occupational training (LOT) and intensive activity period (IAP) programmes, and 20 on New Deal 18-24 programmes. Adults on work skills development programmes are offered a range of qualifications designed to meet their individual needs. Programmes generally consist of a short taster leading to an Open College Network (OCN) qualification in one of the craft skills, followed by a foundation construction award in a chosen craft. All Jobcentre Plus clients follow a jobsearch programme and many are found work placements. Young people on New Deal 18-24 follow a similar programme of courses, jobsearch and work placements. There are 13 foundation modern apprentices, many of whom complete OCN taster courses before their apprenticeship. All modern apprentices take additional basic IT and computing courses.

ABOUT THE INSPECTION

Number of inspectors	7
Number of inspection days	26
Number of learner interviews	81
Number of staff interviews	56
Number of employer interviews	8
Number of locations/sites/learning centres visited	3
Number of visits	14

OVERALL JUDGEMENT

4. The quality of provision is adequate to meet the reasonable needs of those receiving it. JLT's leadership and management are satisfactory. Its arrangements for equality of opportunity are good but for quality assurance they are unsatisfactory. Training in construction 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	2
Quality assurance	4

Construction	3
Contributory grades:	
New Deal 25+ and work-based learning for adults	3
New Deal 18-24	3
Work-based learning for young people	3

KEY FINDINGS

Achievement and standards

5. **Learners and clients develop good vocational skills.** The standard of practical work produced in the workshops and on site is good and appropriate for the industry.

6. **Job achievement rates are unsatisfactory.** In recent years the rates have been well below those set by Jobcentre Plus. JLT has not performed well when compared with other providers in the area. No modern apprentices were retained in 2002-03. Since the recent changes in staffing, there have been significant improvements in job outcomes.

Changes to the foundation modern apprenticeship programme have reduced the number of early leavers in the current intake.

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
Construction	1	1	10	5	2	0	0	19
Total	1	1	10	5	2	0	0	19

7. **On- and off-the-job training are good.** Generally, on-the-job training provides the learners with a wide range of practical training and good levels of experienced supervision. Off-the-job training staff have a good working knowledge of the abilities of the learners and are adept at meeting their individual needs. The diversity of the learners is evident in the classroom, and tutors succeed in encouraging diverse groups of learners to work together to promote learning.

8. **Learners benefit from very good personal support.** Tutors assist learners who have personal problems, provide good advice, and respond quickly to their problems. Employment officers have been effective in increasing the number of learners achieving jobs by providing good personal support.

9. **Recording of assessment in work-based learning is inadequate.** Some learners do not have individual assessment plans, and few learners are aware of the number of assessments required to complete their qualification. There is inadequate recording and monitoring of learners' progress towards completing the qualification. Feedback by assessors to learners is not properly recorded.

10. **Learners' progress reviews are poor.** The recording is weak, there is little action-planning, and few short-term, measurable targets are set. Reviews do not encourage learners to progress quickly. They are not used to update or modify individual learning plans. Learning plans do not focus sufficiently on individual learners.

Leadership and management

11. **Senior managers set a clear strategic direction for the company.** An ambitious expansion plan has resulted in a doubling of turnover in the past three years and aims for a further doubling of turnover in the next three. The business plan clearly outlines how this will be achieved. JLT aims to train a diverse range of learners for employment in the construction industry.

12. **There is a wide range of links with external organisations.** Long-standing partnerships with organisations promoting construction work to women have helped JLT to recruit female learners. Close links with employers produce good opportunities for learners to gain work experience and jobs.

13. **JLT has a particularly inclusive and welcoming atmosphere that encourages learning.**

JOHN LAING TRAINING LIMITED

JLT accepts learners regardless of age, ethnicity, or social problems. This produces a rich and diverse mix of learners, who represent of the diversity within the local communities.

14. **The management information system is weak.** Many of the standard management reports that are required by the company cannot be produced directly from the system. Managers and administrators have to manipulate data manually to present it in the form required.

15. **The quality assurance system is incomplete and does little to assure or improve the quality of the provision.**

The following strengths and weaknesses were identified during this inspection:

Leadership and management

Strengths

- clear strategic direction
- good links with external organisations
- good communications
- particularly inclusive and welcoming atmosphere that encourages learning

Weaknesses

- weak management information system
- insufficient qualified assessors
- incomplete quality assurance systems and procedures
- inadequate use of feedback to improve the quality of the training provision
- insufficient development and monitoring of equal opportunities

Construction

Strengths

- good development of vocational skills
- good training
- good development of additional IT skills in modern apprenticeships
- very good personal support

Weaknesses

- unsatisfactory job achievement rate
- no modern apprentices retained in 2002-03
- inadequate recording of assessment in modern apprenticeships
- ineffective progress reviews

WHAT LEARNERS LIKE ABOUT JOHN LAING TRAINING LIMITED:

- learning new skills
- getting prepared for jobs
- the friendly atmosphere in the training centre
- 'the firm, fair and helpful staff who want us all to do well'
- 'the course is giving me skills that make me feel good about myself'
- work placements that give them good experience

WHAT LEARNERS THINK JOHN LAING TRAINING LIMITED COULD IMPROVE:

- the places to store tools
- the amount of cleaning supplies
- the number of bricklaying tutors at Hackney
- the toilet facilities at Hackney and Newham
- the amount of work experience
- the heating at Hackney

KEY CHALLENGES FOR JOHN LAING TRAINING LIMITED:

- improve the management information system
- increase the number of qualified assessors and verifiers
- improve learners' progress reviews
- use the quality assurance measures consistently across the organisation
- continue to improve learners' rate of progress into jobs

DETAILED INSPECTION FINDINGS

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Grade 3

The following strengths and weaknesses were identified during this inspection:

Strengths

- clear strategic direction
- good links with external organisations
- good communications
- particularly inclusive and welcoming atmosphere that encourages learning

Weaknesses

- weak management information system
- insufficient qualified assessors
- incomplete quality assurance systems and procedures
- inadequate use of feedback to improve the quality of the training provision
- insufficient development and monitoring of equal opportunities

16. Senior managers at JLT set a clear strategic direction for the company. An ambitious expansion plan has resulted in a doubling of turnover in the past three years, and aims for a further doubling of turnover in the next three. The business plan clearly outlines how this will be achieved. JLT aims to train a diverse range of learners for employment in the construction industry and increase the qualification level of the workforce. The company has restructured its management team recently, following self-assessment and a review of the business plan. The changes made are beneficial to clients, as they have improved the support and training. Staff are well informed of the company's strategy and business objectives.

17. There is a wide range of links with external organisations. JLT works closely with its many funding partners to ensure that its training programmes meet the needs of the local industries and communities, and complement local development needs. A long-standing partnership with an organisation that encourages women into construction has been successful in securing funding from the European Social Fund to recruit female learners. Staff are also working with another organisation to promote the industry to women. JLT is working with the London Borough of Newham on a project designed to introduce young learners from minority ethnic groups to the construction industry. JLT's staff at all levels are involved in local and national construction industry committees and working groups. These partnerships have a clear and positive effect. For example, 30 per cent of the construction crafts learners at one centre are women. A partnership with a local college benefits learners through the good provision of English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) courses at all of the training centres. Employment officers, introduced in the recent restructure, maintain close links with employers, and provide the clients with good opportunities to gain work experience and job opportunities.

18. Internal and external communications are good. A sound business meeting system and open management style enables staff to air their views and make a contribution to the running of the company. All managers operate an open-door policy and encourage staff to express their views to all levels of management. Business plans are produced at each centre. Staff attend a one-day meeting to ensure that they have the opportunity to contribute to the plan. All new staff receive a thorough induction that covers the company's policies, procedures and business strategy. This strength was recognised in the self-assessment report.

19. Target-setting is satisfactory. Weekly business targets are set for each business manager. Job achievement targets are set and performance against targets is monitored. There are no overall targets for retention rates and achievement of qualifications. In most centres the number of early leavers is monitored and ways of improving retention are discussed at staff meetings.

20. The annual staff appraisal system is satisfactory. It identifies staff development needs and manages performance effectively. All training staff have suitable industrial experience but many do not have a training qualification. The staff development plan concentrates on training and assessment. JLT has been slow to take action to train assessors, but most staff are now well into their assessor/verifier training.

21. JLT's management information system is weak. Many of the management reports the company needs cannot be produced directly from the system. Managers and administrators have to manually process the system data to present it in the form required. This is very time-consuming, especially for the weekly business reports that are submitted to the senior managers. Other reports that managers would have found useful are not produced because of the difficulties involved. Information on how many learners have achieved qualifications or who has attended work experience is not readily available from the system. The shortcomings of the management information system have been identified as a weakness by JLT in its self-assessment.

22. There are too few qualified assessors in most centres. In one centre there are no fully qualified assessors. Staff turnover has been higher than anticipated in some areas, and delays in training new assessors have led to some learners being disadvantaged by late submission of portfolios and subsequent delays in certification.

Equality of opportunity

Contributory grade 2

23. JLT has a particularly inclusive and welcoming atmosphere that encourages learning. The company accepts learners regardless of age, ethnicity or social problems, and this produces a rich and diverse mix of learners who represent the diversity within the local communities. Learners are encouraged to work in partnership with the instructors and with each other to achieve their learning aims, and they appreciate the opportunities and support provided. Learners' care responsibilities are acknowledged and, where possible, flexible arrangements are made to accommodate individual learners' needs. Training and administrative staff are keen to assist learners with their diverse needs. This strength

was recognised in the self-assessment report.

24. Learners and staff are aware of equal opportunities and diversity. Equality of opportunity is covered adequately at staff and learners' inductions, and they all receive a copy of the equal opportunities policy. The policy is brief and requires updating to include recent legislation. A new draft equal opportunities document has been produced and is going through a consultation and document control process. Equal opportunities is a fixed agenda item at monthly team meetings and also at quarterly quality assurance and equal opportunities meetings. The managing director has overall responsibility for equal opportunities and attends the quarterly meetings. JLT's commitment to diversity is clear from its success in recruiting and retaining a diverse range of learners.

25. JLT has been successful in recruiting more women into construction training. Its efforts in promoting construction to women have been particularly effective at the Newham training centre, where 15 per cent of the learners are women. In other centres, the proportion of women is 2 to 3 per cent, which is broadly in line with national statistics. JLT is now beginning to share the good practice at Newham with the other centres. For example, female learners are now offered support from a nominated female representative at each centre. JLT has recruited more female staff over the past few years, including one female construction crafts tutor. JLT supports its staff and learners by giving consideration to flexible working arrangements when they are needed to help manage care responsibilities.

26. The few complaints that JLT has received have been dealt with fairly and promptly. Few incidents of discrimination take place but when they do JLT challenges inappropriate language and behaviour immediately. There is suitable access to workshop and training areas for people with restricted mobility. There are currently no learners with mobility problems. Learners with hearing and speech difficulties are supported appropriately. For example, additional support staff are used to provide signing.

27. JLT carries out insufficient staff development and monitoring of equal opportunities. Although staff awareness of diversity and equal opportunities is satisfactory, there is little formal staff training to ensure the development of their knowledge. Most staff have had no training in equal opportunities except the basic induction to the policy. Data are not used to monitor trends in learners' recruitment or achievement, the leaving rates of different groups of learners, or to set targets. JLT does not have a formal written strategy for the development, promotion or monitoring of equal opportunities. Equality of opportunity is not sufficiently formally monitored at learners' progress reviews but care is taken to place learners with reliable employers. An advice booklet is given to each employer with details of JLT's equal opportunities policy.

Quality assurance

Contributory grade 4

28. Staff at JLT have satisfactory awareness of the quality assurance procedures. The operations manager is responsible for the implementation of the policy and procedures, which are clear and detailed. Staff are given information on the quality assurance system

JOHN LAING TRAINING LIMITED

at induction. Each training centre has a copy of the quality assurance manual and clear procedures flow charts are available on the intranet and displayed in the offices. The manual contains a broad range of documents to involve staff in a range of processes, including audits, observations of training and assessment. Quality assurance procedures are covered by the document control system, updated regularly and reviewed by a quality assurance review team which meets quarterly. However, a number of these policies have not been in place long enough to be established or to have had an impact on the learners.

29. Staff are well aware of the self-assessment process. They are regularly involved in contributing to the self-assessment process and business plan for their training centre. They attend an annual conference that is primarily designed to build team-working but is also used to collect the views of staff on the company's strengths and weaknesses. Staff are divided into groups to evaluate the company. The results are used effectively to write the self-assessment report and a comprehensive development plan. However, the self-assessment report does not relate clearly to the 'Common Inspection Framework' and is not sufficiently self-critical. It identifies some of the same strengths and weaknesses as those found by the inspectors, but omits further weaknesses. Grades for construction and quality assurance given in the self-assessment report were higher than those given at inspection.

30. The quality assurance system is incomplete. Some processes are inadequate, others are not yet fully implemented and there are variations in how the system is used in different centres. The quality assurance system does little to assure or improve the quality of the training provision. The management information collected is difficult to access, and not analysed fully or used to develop the service or set targets.

31. There is inadequate use of feedback to improve the quality of the training provision. Some observations of training and assessment are carried out at the training centres by the assistant managers who are responsible for quality assurance. The quality of the written feedback given to assessors is not good enough to bring about improvements in the standard of assessment or training. Training needs are not routinely identified and not all staff are observed. There are no effective measures to assure the quality of progress reviews. Good practice is not consistently shared across the training centres. Feedback is collected from learners, analysed, and reported to senior managers. However, it does not form a regular item on the fixed agenda of management meetings and does not contribute to the self-assessment process or development plan. Some of the learners' feedback concerns the buildings, and improvements to the toilet and canteen facilities. These have not been prioritised in the development plan, which focuses more on issues identified by staff. JLT's staff are responsive to any immediate requests from learners, such as the need for replacement safety shoes, extra support for form filling, help with benefits and referral to appropriate agencies. Arrangements for collecting feedback from employers are inadequate. Employers' views are usually sought informally by the employment officers.

32. The internal verification system is not fully developed or complete. Internal verification is poor at two centres where there are few qualified internal verifiers.

Internal verification usually takes place when learners' portfolios of evidence are complete and there is no long-term sampling plan to ensure that all assessors, assessment methods and units are sampled. The internal verification system is not working to improve the quality of assessments. For example, assessors are given feedback after observations, but it often fails to identify areas for development that could improve standards or set targets. Learners are rarely interviewed by internal verifiers and rarely given effective targets. Staff have little or no knowledge of any targets set for any aspect of activity. Internal verifiers meet assessors in their trade groups across the centres, to discuss and resolve any difficulties. There are few opportunities for the standardisation of assessments.

AREAS OF LEARNING

Construction

Grade 3

Programmes inspected	Number of learners	Contributory grade
New Deal 25+ and work-based learning for adults	126	3
New Deal 18-24	20	3
Work-based learning for young people	13	3

The following strengths and weaknesses were identified during this inspection:

Strengths

- good development of vocational skills
- good training
- good development of additional IT skills in modern apprenticeships
- very good personal support

Weaknesses

- unsatisfactory job achievement rate
- no modern apprentices retained in 2002-03
- inadequate recording of assessment in modern apprenticeships
- ineffective progress reviews

Achievement and standards

33. Learners develop good practical skills in the training centre. The standard of practical work produced is good. Learners perform practical tasks confidently and use their initiative to solve problems effectively. They hang doors, build walls, and hang wallpaper to good industrial standards. They use hand and power tools safely and appropriately. Some are able to plan and set out work without supervision. Tutors provide good individual coaching during practical training sessions. They are skilled at giving clear explanations, and helping learners develop good techniques in their work. They set tasks appropriate to learners' individual skills and make sure that they continue to develop after reaching the skills level required for their qualifications. Tutors and learners develop good working relationships that foster learning.

34. Foundation modern apprentices develop good vocational skills and knowledge. They experience a wide range of practical on-the-job training and consistently achieve work of a good industrial standard. They work on a variety of sites and develop the broad range of skills required to achieve their qualification and improve their employment prospects. For example, one painting and decorating learner has gained experience on four sites, including refurbishment and new-build projects. Employers are very supportive and provide good levels of experienced supervision. Good off-the-job

training reinforces learners' practical and technical knowledge. Key skills are taught as an integral part of the occupational training. Modern apprentices effectively develop most key skills by carrying out tasks related to their chosen occupation. They find this approach interesting and relevant.

35. The standard of work in learners' portfolios of evidence is satisfactory. Portfolios are well presented and referenced and contain relevant evidence. However, they do not contain enough evidence from work-experience placements.

36. Job achievement rates are unsatisfactory. In recent years, JLT has been well below its Jobcentre Plus target rates of 40 per cent for LOT and 44 per cent for IAP. JLT has not performed well when compared with other training providers in the area. It has recognised the problem and has appointed three employment officers with the specific role of helping learners to get jobs. Staff now have a clear focus on achievement. Since these changes, job achievement rates for LOT have improved considerably and are currently running at 44 per cent. Rates for learners on IAP programmes have improved but remain below target. JLT maintains its commitment to under-represented groups and continues to improve, despite the difficulty in finding local work placements for learners.

37. No foundation modern apprentices were retained in 2002-03. This was the first year JLT had offered modern apprenticeship training. Major changes have been made to the recruitment and initial assessment processes, and the proportion of early leavers has decreased significantly in 2003-04.

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

LSC funded work-based learning																
Foundation modern apprenticeships (FMA)	2003-04		2002-03		2001-02		2000-01									
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
	Number of starts	18		15												
Retained*	0		0	0												
Successfully completed	0		0	0												
Still in learning	13		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

Jobcentre Plus funded programmes																
New Deal 18-24																
	2003-04		2002-03		2001-02		2000-01									
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number of starts	69		100		47		11									
Retained*	14		42	42	31	66	2	18								
Planned learning completed	14		42	42	31	66	2	18								
Gained job	14		18	18	3	6	0	0								
Still in training	20		0	0	0	0	0	0								

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

Jobcentre Plus funded programmes																
New Deal 25+																
	2003-04		2002-03		2001-02		2000-01									
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number of starts	340		356		387		61									
Retained*	99		189	53	236	61	24	39								
Planned learning completed	84		175	49	222	57	24	39								
Gained job	29		34	10	20	5	0	0								
Still in training	126		0	0	0	0	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

38. On- and off-the-job training are good. Off the job, the standard of practical and background knowledge teaching and learning is good. Inspectors observed 19 learning sessions, of which 64 per cent were good or better. Learners receive good literacy, numeracy and language support in training sessions. Staff have a good working knowledge of their abilities and are adept at meeting their individual needs. In most cases, the results of initial assessments are available to tutors and they use them well to plan how to cope with learners of differing abilities. In the better sessions, tutors caught the interest of the learners early in the session and maintained it throughout with a selection of interesting and relevant materials and tasks. For example, one group of construction learners in a literacy, numeracy and language support session was learning mathematics through exercises in map reading. For 13 of the 15 learners, English was an additional language, and they were required to give directions in English to enhance their language skills. In many sessions, appropriate and challenging targets were set and group work was effectively encouraged and managed. The diversity of the learners was evident in the classroom and tutors succeeded in encouraging diverse groups to work together to promote learning. Tutors made good use of their industrial experience in the

practical sessions, often passing on useful tips to increase learners' speed and awareness of the demands of site work. On the job, learners generally experience a wide range of practical training and good levels of experienced practical supervision.

39. Modern apprentices and clients on work-based learning for adults follow a recognised IT qualification and develop good IT skills. There are good IT resources and learners value the qualification and recognise how it benefits their longer-term employment prospects. The range of courses offered by JLT is well suited to the needs of the learners. There are good opportunities for learners to experience several different construction industry trades before deciding which programme to follow. This strength is recognised in the self-assessment report.

40. Learners benefit from very good personal support. Tutors at JLT take a particular interest in the development of learners' skills and support them very well in their quest for work experience and employment. Learners appreciate the support they receive from tutors and employment officers. There have been instances of tutors collecting learners who have been unable to get to the training centre. There is regular contact, both in person and by telephone, between tutors and learners in work placements, or when learners first start employment. Tutors also assist learners who have personal problems and provide good support, advice and counselling to ensure they remain in training and make progress towards their learning goals. Tutors respond quickly and effectively to learners' problems. Employment officers have been effective in increasing the number of learners achieving jobs. Job success rates have recently improved and inspectors saw learners who had gained full-time employment in a museum and at a prestigious new building development. Employment officers have developed good networks of employers and are familiar with the way that the construction industry recruits its workforce. They do not underestimate how daunting it is for learners to present themselves at busy construction sites and obtain work. They provide very good support, initially accompanying learners to sites and gradually encouraging more independence. Jobsearch is satisfactory and improving since the appointment of the employment officers. Jobsearch sessions prepare learners well and introduce them to the variety of media in which they can find jobs. Employment officers effectively coach learners on how to present themselves to employers. Sessions include letter writing skills, communication and interview skills, and curriculum vitae writing.

41. Recording of assessment in work-based learning is inadequate. Some learners do not have individual assessment plans, and few learners are aware of the number of assessments required to complete their qualification. There is inadequate recording and monitoring of learners' progress towards completing the qualification. Feedback by assessors to learners is not properly recorded. Assessment is generally fair, accurate and reliable but not enough assessment takes place at work and there is not enough use of work-based evidence. Although learners have been on programme for up to six months there has not yet been any assessment of key skills evidence. No clear strategy exists for the assessment of key skills. There is a shortage of qualified assessors for the Jobcentre Plus programmes, and delays in assessment and certification of qualifications.

42. Learners' progress reviews are poor. There are separate monthly reviews for both

the workplace and the training centre. Discussion takes place between learners, workplace supervisors or representatives and training staff. The recording is weak. There is little action-planning and few short-term, measurable targets are set. Reviews do not encourage learners to progress more quickly. They are not used to update or modify individual learning plans. Training plans do not focus sufficiently on individual learners. Many simply list the unit requirements of the qualification. Literacy, numeracy and language tests are completed by all learners but the results of these assessments are not incorporated into individual training plans. JLT did not identify reviews as a weakness in its self-assessment report.

Leadership and management

43. The management team and staff have created a learning environment in which a diverse range of learners co-operates and learns together in a positive and welcoming atmosphere. Managers at JLT have effectively raised the quality of learners' experience by changing the staffing to concentrate on supporting individual learners.

44. The good communications and the clear strategic direction set by the senior management team are reflected in the management of the provision at centre level. Middle managers also adopt an open management style and communicate well and are now beginning to share good practice between training centres.

45. The range and quality of specialist equipment in workshops are adequate. Overall, there are satisfactory stocks of materials and tools of appropriate industry standards. Classrooms and workshops are adequately equipped to facilitate a range of teaching methods and provide a suitable environment for training. However, some of the workshops are untidy. For example, the brickwork workshop floor had not been swept and the plastering workshop was untidy. There is an adequate number of computers for the learners. Learning materials for construction and key skills are generally satisfactory and meet the needs of the learners. However, some reproduced materials are of poor quality. Although the learning environment is generally acceptable, there are occasions when the temperature in some areas of the workshops is unacceptably low. The level of traffic noise in some training rooms can be distracting for the learners. Tutors have appropriate occupational qualifications, experience and technical knowledge but there are not enough qualified assessors and internal verifiers, and there are delays in assessment and certification.

46. Quality assurance measures are not fully implemented at all the centres.