

INSPECTION REPORT

Seleta Training & Personnel Services Ltd

24 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

Seleta Training & Personnel Services Ltd

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INSPECTION REPORT

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROVIDER

1. Seleta Training and Personnel Services Ltd (Seleta TPS Ltd) was established in 1968 as the South East London Training Group, with the support of the engineering industry's national training organisation and other training boards and companies. The company changed its name to Seleta TPS Ltd in 1989 to reflect the wider range of provision it now offers. Seleta TPS Ltd operates from two sites in south London, at Blackheath and Croydon. The company's head office is at the Blackheath site, as are many of the support services for engineering training. The Croydon site offers facilities for information and communication technology (ICT) and foundation programmes.

2. There are 142 learners, 36 on engineering programmes: 80 on ICT programmes and 26 on foundation programmes. The company also offers national vocational qualifications (NVQs) in business administration. This provision was not inspected as the number of learners was very small. In addition to government-funded programmes the company also provides commercial training in ICT applications and lift truck driving.

3. The company has two directors, one of whom is the managing director. They are jointly responsible for business development and planning, finance, human resources and contracts. An operations manager is in charge of day-to-day activities at the Croydon training centre. The company employs 17 full-time and three part-time staff, including administrators. Seleta TPS Ltd holds work-based learning contracts with London East and London South Learning and Skills Councils (LSCs). Some programmes in ICT are co-funded by the European Social Fund and the LSC.

SCOPE OF PROVISION

Engineering, technology & manufacturing

4. There are 36 learners on engineering training programmes: 24 mechanical, eight electrical, and four manufacturing engineers. Twenty-two advanced modern apprentices are following a level 3 NVQ in engineering maintenance, production, manufacturing or electronics. They attend one of five colleges on day release for background knowledge training and to study for further engineering qualifications. Thirteen learners are working towards an NVQ at level 3 and one towards an NVQ at level 2 in engineering. All the learners are employed in the London area. Learners are recruited through Connexions, referred by their employers, or apply directly as a result of advertisements. On-the-job training is carried out at the employers' premises, and learners are assessed in the workplace by qualified assessors from Seleta TPS Ltd, although four employers have qualified assessors of their own. Learners' progress reviews are carried out every eight weeks either in the workplace or at the Blackheath training centre.

Information & communications technology

5. Seleta TPS Ltd offers a range of ICT courses for young people at its training centre in Croydon. There are 80 learners, 7.5 per cent of whom are women. Thirty-one learners are on the work-based learning computer engineering course, and attend the centre for three days each week over a period of 14 months. They receive training in key skills and in the use of computer hardware and software, working towards an NVQ at level 2 in performing engineering operations. Seleta TPS Ltd is an accredited training centre for a range of short courses leading to specialised computer qualifications, and offers specialist training modules in computer networking and system administration, designed and certificated by leading computer companies. There are 49 learners on these courses, which run for between five and 15 weeks. Learners spend two days a week at the training centre. Seven learners are following a qualification in information technology (IT) in addition to their NVQ or specialist course. Many learners apply directly for courses, some of which have waiting lists. Others are referred through Connexions, schools and other agencies. New courses are sometimes advertised. Subject to an interview, learners are recruited onto an induction programme that includes initial assessment and guidance. They are not employed, and in addition to their two or three days a week at the centre, they take part in additional study or project work.

Foundation programmes

6. Seleta TPS Ltd has enrolled 46 learners on the Entry to Employment (E2E) programme since August 2003. There are currently 26 learners, two of whom have only recently started. Learners are referred from Connexions or self-referred. They spend 16 hours each week training at the centre and four hours on directed learning or project work. Learners work towards achieving basic and key skills, and personal and vocational skills. Vocational training is either in business administration or computer engineering. Learners can work towards achieving an NVQ at level 1 in computer literacy and IT. They can also gain additional qualifications in basic literacy and numeracy. E2E learners on the business administration course have the opportunity of a work placement in-house at the training centre, but there are no work placements available for other learners on the programme. Learners can join the E2E programme any time.

ABOUT THE INSPECTION

Number of inspectors	5
Number of inspection days	20
Number of learner interviews	48
Number of staff interviews	20
Number of employer interviews	4
Number of locations/sites/learning centres visited	2

OVERALL JUDGEMENT

7. The quality of the provision is not adequate to meet the reasonable needs of those receiving it. The quality of learning in ICT is satisfactory. In engineering, technology and manufacturing and foundation programmes, the quality of learning is unsatisfactory. The leadership and management of Seleta TPS Ltd are unsatisfactory, as is its approach to quality assurance. Its approach to equality of opportunity is satisfactory.

GRADES

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

Leadership and management	4
Contributory grades:	
Equality of opportunity	3
Quality assurance	4

Engineering, technology & manufacturing		4
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
<i>Mechanical engineering</i> - Work-based learning for young people	24	4
<i>Electrical engineering</i> - Work-based learning for young people	8	4
<i>Manufacturing</i> - Work-based learning for young people	4	None

Information & communications technology		3
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
<i>Developing IT systems</i> - Work-based learning for young people	31	4
<i>Using IT</i> - Other government-funded provision	49	2
Foundation programmes		4
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
<i>Employability/employment training</i> - Entry to Employment	26	4

KEY FINDINGS

Achievement and standards

8. The overall retention rate for learners is satisfactory. On the E2E programme the retention rate is adequate at 57 per cent. On the engineering and ICT NVQ programmes, retention has improved slightly over the past two years, although achievement rates on both of these programmes are poor.

9. The work produced by learners on the E2E programme is often unsatisfactory, and little is done to correct this.

10. Target-setting is insufficiently thorough and often poorly recorded. Most individual learning plans and review documents do not contain clear long- or short-term targets for learners. Where targets are set, they are not clearly focused on key aspects of learning and often only relate to the personal and social support learners need. They are not always sufficiently challenging or demanding for the more capable and experienced learners. Insufficient account is taken of the results of learners' initial assessment or prior learning.

Quality of education and training

11. Inspectors observed 12 learning sessions. Two-thirds were satisfactory or better.

12. There is good teaching using good-quality resources on ICT programmes. Learning support is good for engineering learners. Although there are no learners who have currently been identified as requiring it, there is sufficient support available for learners

who have additional learning needs such as dyslexia. **Some teaching and learning on the E2E programme is unsatisfactory and unstimulating.** Learning objectives are not always made clear and there is inadequate use of appropriate learning materials.

13. **Personal and social support for learners is good.** Learners on all programmes are given a particularly high level of pastoral support including assistance with travel and housing.

14. **Assessment practices are poor.** NVQ assessments in engineering are left until very late in the programme. Learners' work in ICT is often poorly marked and they are given insufficient feedback. **Internal verification is unsatisfactory** and poorly planned. It has failed to identify the key issues that assessors need to remedy.

15. The results of initial assessment are not clearly used to plan individual learning. There is insufficient analysis and recognition of individual learning styles. Learning plans do not clearly identify clear goals. Many are insufficiently detailed and are not kept up to date.

16. **The provision for work placements is poor** for learners on E2E and on the NVQ programme in ICT. A few learners have had the chance to work in the office at Seleta TPS Ltd, although the number has been very small. There is no clear plan for how learners will achieve the skills required for work-based learning.

Leadership and management

17. **Staff training and development are good.** Staff are appraised regularly and their development needs identified. They have the opportunity to participate in a wide range of development programmes to enhance their knowledge and skills.

18. **Management information is not used effectively in decision-making.** Although managers and staff collect data, it is not used in a sensible format that would enable directors to identify trends or emerging issues easily. Insufficient use is made of data to improve the provision.

19. **Arrangements for quality assurance are ineffective.** Some observations of teaching and learning have taken place, but the resulting feedback to tutors has not always been sufficient to clearly identify the improvements needed. There are no arrangements or service level agreements with subcontractors or employers to assure the quality of training.

20. **Seleta TPS Ltd's self-assessment process is insufficiently thorough** and does not clearly identify the key issues to be dealt with. There is insufficient use of feedback from employers, subcontractors, staff and learners and inadequate use of data in action-planning.

21. **Learners have a good understanding of the wider issues relating to equality of**

opportunity. Seleta TPS Ltd takes complaints seriously and acts promptly to deal with them. Staff have an adequate understanding of equal opportunities and diversity and most have had additional training.

Leadership and management

Strengths

- good staff development
- open and consultative management
- good learner awareness of equality of opportunity

Weaknesses

- poor use of management information
- inadequate management of equality of opportunity with employers and subcontractors
- ineffective arrangements to assure the quality of training
- inadequate self-assessment

Engineering, technology & manufacturing

Mechanical engineering

Strengths

- very good development of vocational skills
- good additional support for learners

Weaknesses

- very poor achievement rates
- poor NVQ assessment practices
- inadequate use of learning plans and recording of learners' progress
- unsatisfactory management of provision

Electrical engineering

Strengths

- very good development of vocational skills
- good additional support for learners

Weaknesses

- very poor achievement rates
- poor NVQ assessment practices
- inadequate use of learning plans and recording of learners' progress
- unsatisfactory management of provision

Manufacturing

Strengths

- very good development of vocational skills
- good additional support for learners

Weaknesses

- very poor achievement rates
- poor NVQ assessment practices
- inadequate recording of learning plans and learners' progress
- unsatisfactory management of provision

Information & communications technology

Developing IT systems

Strengths

- good teaching
- good resources to support learning
- very good pastoral support for learners

Weaknesses

- poor achievement on the NVQ programme
- weak assessment on the NVQ programme
- inadequate target-setting at reviews
- inadequate provision of work placements for the NVQ programme

Using IT

Strengths

- good teaching
- good progress on specialist short courses
- good resources to support learning
- very good pastoral support for learners

Weaknesses

- inadequate target-setting at reviews

Foundation programmes

Employability/employment training

Strengths

- very good, comprehensive personal support

Weaknesses

- inadequate initial assessment
- ineffective progress reviews
- unsatisfactory programme management

WHAT LEARNERS LIKE ABOUT SELETA TRAINING & PERSONNEL SERVICES LTD:

- the good learning opportunities
- being unafraid to ask questions
- learning through group teaching
- their knowledgeable tutors
- the ease of access to the Croydon centre
- staff that take a personal interest in them
- the opportunity to take further courses
- being able to spend extra time at the centre
- being treated as adults

WHAT LEARNERS THINK SELETA TRAINING & PERSONNEL SERVICES LTD COULD IMPROVE:

- the range of software applications courses
- the amount of work experience
- the arrangements for progress reviews - they would rather not have to travel for them
- 'nothing needs improving'
- the quantity of CD-based learning materials

KEY CHALLENGES FOR SELETA TRAINING & PERSONNEL SERVICES LTD:

- improve quality assurance and control arrangements
- manage and use management information better
- increase the number of work placements
- carry out better course planning and review
- formalise and record staff meetings
- improve assessment practices
- set clearer targets for learners

DETAILED INSPECTION FINDINGS

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Grade 4

Strengths

- good staff development
- open and consultative management
- good learner awareness of equality of opportunity

Weaknesses

- poor use of management information
- inadequate management of equality of opportunity with employers and subcontractors
- ineffective arrangements to assure the quality of training
- inadequate self-assessment

22. Seleta TPS Ltd provides good staff development. Annual staff appraisals are supported by mid-year reviews and used well to identify individual training needs. There are many opportunities for staff to take training courses, and their qualifications are regularly updated where appropriate. Managers identified that staff needed training in negotiation skills to deal with some of the more difficult learners. Staff who had had this training requested a further course on managing conflict and physical violence, and this was organised through the local constabulary. However, the records of some recent appraisals indicate that they were perfunctory and managers had not set clear personal performance targets for staff.

23. The management style of directors and senior staff is open and consultative. Directors regularly visit each centre and staff and learners find them approachable. The centre managers are always available to see learners and deal with their problems. Tutors have weekly informal meetings where many issues are discussed. However, these meetings are not always recorded and actions are not clearly identified.

24. Management information systems are used well to record data on learners, but that data is not then used by managers to monitor and evaluate learners' progress and achievement. Seleta TPS Ltd's managers have recognised the need to collect and better use data on learners' progress and achievement, and are developing a new information system to enable them to access this more easily. Staff were unable to provide accurate data on learners' progress and achievement until well into the inspection. Learner data was not used in the self-assessment process. No records have been kept of management meetings since October 2003, and before that they were not conducted or recorded regularly. Some action points are identified during meetings, but these were not followed up at subsequent meetings.

25. Business planning is satisfactory. The company has a three-year development plan

which is linked to funding body targets. It contains key objectives for the period and focuses on current programmes and learners. Clear consideration is given to local developments or demand for specific training or qualifications.

Equality of opportunity

Contributory grade 3

26. Learners' awareness of equal opportunities and diversity issues is good. Many learners join Seleta TPS Ltd with a good appreciation of these issues. Tutors running induction sessions become aware of learners' skills and use the opportunity to develop and test their knowledge. Learners interviewed by inspectors were able to answer questions and comment upon recent media issues in respect of diversity and equal opportunities issues.

27. Seleta TPS Ltd has a clear commitment to the promotion of equality of opportunity. Its objectives are clearly communicated to learners, staff and the community through the business objectives and recruitment strategies. The company has a comprehensive equal opportunities policy that is reviewed annually. Copies are distributed to all staff and a simplified version is given to learners during their induction. The policy has clear statements about how the provider will deal with equal opportunities and diversity issues including harassment, grievances and appeals. Until this year, staff have had regular training in equality and diversity. The training was postponed this year. Learners show a good understanding of equal opportunities and of the company's complaints and grievance procedures. Equal opportunities is not emphasised sufficiently or monitored thoroughly at learners' progress reviews.

28. Seleta TPS Ltd tries hard to widen participation in its training programmes and remove barriers for existing and prospective learners, but it does not set specific targets for the recruitment of under-represented groups. The company monitors learners by ethnicity, gender, age and home address, and a quarterly report is produced and shared with staff. Learners attend Seleta TPS Ltd from a number of London boroughs. The profile of staff and learners broadly reflects the community served. Five per cent of staff have a disability, 40 per cent are from minority ethnic groups and 35 per cent are women. Seven per cent of learners have a disability and 65 per cent are from minority ethnic groups. Thirteen per cent are women.

29. Promotional and marketing materials actively promote the cultural diversity of the organisation. However, the material is only available in English. Tutors provide very effective personal support for learners, many of whom have significant social and personal needs. There have been examples of learners made homeless while on programme who were rapidly and sympathetically found new and appropriate accommodation.

30. Equality and diversity data is analysed every three months and used to good effect. The results contribute to an annual management report which is then used to improve the provision. In 2002, it was identified that one in three young women who left programmes were leaving because they were pregnant. Further work identified that 60 per cent of women learners had very little knowledge and understanding of

contraception. The provider has organised visits for learners to a local clinic where they are given clear and appropriate advice.

31. Access to the main training centre in Croydon is good for learners with mobility difficulties. All classrooms are accessible by lift. Training rooms are fitted with closed-circuit television, and this is centrally monitored by administration staff. Access to the Blackheath training centre is more difficult for learners with mobility problems, although strategies are in place to deal with this.

32. Seleta TPS Ltd does not check or hold copies of employers' or subcontractors' equal opportunities and diversity policies. The company does not formally monitor equality of opportunity with employers and subcontractors regularly.

Quality assurance

Contributory grade 4

33. The managing director is responsible for quality assurance and the company was recently accredited with Investors in People, a national standard for improving an organisation's performance through its people. The quality assurance procedures are incomplete and do not cover all aspects of the training process. There is no system to ensure that the quality assurance arrangements are reviewed and evaluated, and no regular internal audit of the training procedures. Data is collected to satisfy the requirements of external agencies but it is not regularly used or analysed by senior staff to help plan improvements. Procedures for gathering information from learners are not checked. For example, although progress reviews are carried out regularly, targets are not clear and there are few qualitative comments from learners or staff. No analysis of skills development or progression is included, and learners are not given clear feedback on their progress. Programmes are supported with standard schemes of work which are accessible to all staff.

34. Observations of teaching are carried out annually but tutors are not given enough written feedback. A new observation process has been introduced this year, with a revised recording system. The observation process is not always carried out by appropriately qualified staff within the areas of learning. Tutors' performance is graded on a three-point scale but this is aggregated from a number of different scores for different aspects and often gives a false picture of an individual's overall performance. The observations are not clearly linked to staff appraisal. There is no system in place to observe or monitor training given by subcontractors or employers.

35. Seleta TPS Ltd has no service level agreement with its subcontractors as a basis for effective monitoring of teaching, learning and attendance. Staff from Seleta TPS Ltd do not visit subcontractors regularly to review learners' performance. They do receive copies of four-monthly review documents from the subcontracted colleges, but these are not clearly used to plan the provision. Informal meetings often take place but few are recorded and actions are not reviewed.

36. Internal verification is unsatisfactory and has failed to identify poor assessment practices in some areas. Feedback to assessors is not always thorough, although

responses are clearly checked by the internal verifier. Internal verification is not well planned and does not clearly cover all types of assessment. There are no procedures in place to check the quality of training materials produced by staff.

37. Seleta TPS Ltd's self-assessment process is inadequate. The self-assessment report does not accurately identify the company's key strengths and weaknesses. The strengths and weaknesses that are identified are not supported by clear evidence, and there is no indication of how grades were arrived at. The results of self-assessment have not been used effectively to set objectives in the business plan or to improve the training provision. Selecta TPS Ltd has a three-year development plan linked to funding body targets, but it makes inadequate reference to its own self-assessment. Staff had insufficient involvement in the self-assessment process, and employers' and learners' views were not used effectively. However, regular feedback is collected from learners. It is analysed well and the results are fed back to staff during informal meetings. Some changes have been made to the way programmes are run and organised as a result of this feedback.

38. There is insufficient sharing of good practice between the two centres. Regular staff meetings are not held with staff from both sites.

AREAS OF LEARNING

Engineering, technology & manufacturing

Engineering, technology & manufacturing		4
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
<i>Mechanical engineering</i> - Work-based learning for young people	24	4
<i>Electrical engineering</i> - Work-based learning for young people	8	4
<i>Manufacturing</i> - Work-based learning for young people	4	None

Mechanical engineering

Strengths

- very good development of vocational skills
- good additional support for learners

Weaknesses

- very poor achievement rates
- poor NVQ assessment practices
- inadequate use of learning plans and recording of learners' progress
- unsatisfactory management of provision

Electrical engineering

Strengths

- very good development of vocational skills
- good additional support for learners

Weaknesses

- very poor achievement rates
- poor NVQ assessment practices
- inadequate use of learning plans and recording of learners' progress
- unsatisfactory management of provision

Manufacturing

Strengths

- very good development of vocational skills
- good additional support for learners

Weaknesses

- very poor achievement rates
- poor NVQ assessment practices
- inadequate recording of learning plans and learners' progress
- unsatisfactory management of provision

Achievement and standards

39. Achievement rates are very poor for advanced modern apprentices and learners on NVQ programmes. Twenty-one learners started advanced modern apprenticeships in 2000-01, but only three have achieved their qualifications. On the NVQ programme only one of the four learners who started in 2000-01 has successfully completed their qualification. In 2001-02, only 5 per cent of advanced modern apprentices, and seven per cent of NVQ learners were successful. Between 2000-01 and 2002-03, 52 learners started on engineering programmes and only six have achieved qualifications. This is the equivalent of one in nine. None of the learners who started since 2002 has achieved.

40. Retention rates have been poor on both programmes. There are advanced modern apprentices still in learning from each of the past four intakes. The maximum possible retention rates for 2000-01, 2001-02, 2002-03 and 2003-04 are 38 per cent, 55 per cent, 56 per cent and 71 per cent respectively. There are NVQ learners still in learning for each of the past three intakes. In 2000-01, the retention rate was 25 per cent. For 2001-02, the maximum possible retention rate is 28 per cent. The maximum possible retention rates for 2002-03 and 2003-04 are better at 89 per cent and 67 per cent respectively. The provider has no planned system in place to improve achievement. Before they start their programmes, all learners attend a local college to study for an NVQ in performing engineering operations, which includes key skills. Modern apprentices attend further programmes of study, on day release, to gain additional qualifications. None of the current engineering learners has any literacy, numeracy or language needs.

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									
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number of starts	7		9		20		21									
Retained*	0		0	0	1	5	3	14								
Successfully completed	0		0	0	1	5	3	14								
Still in learning	5		5	56	10	50	5	24								

*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									
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number of starts	3		9		7		4									
Retained*	0		0	0	1	14	1	25								
Successfully completed	0		0	0	1	14	1	25								
Still in learning	2		8	89	1	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

Quality of education and training

41. Learners develop very good vocational skills through effective work-based supervision and training. Much of this training is carried out individually in the workplace by experienced and well-qualified engineers. Learners are employed in a wide range of workplaces including a national bakery, hospitals, and lift maintenance companies. They are often mentored by workplace supervisors or experienced engineers. Learners are actively encouraged to build on their skills so that they can carry out increasingly complex tasks without supervision. Lift maintenance, for example, is carried out by a mobile team of one engineer and one learner. The learner helps the engineer to repair a fault, and is then tested by being allowed to carry out a similar repair. If he is successful the supervisor signs his training record which forms part of the evidence for his NVQ portfolio.

42. Learners record each job they carry out and use the records as evidence for their qualification. Other sources of evidence include digital photographs, circuit drawings, health and safety leaflets, and written responses to background knowledge questions. Most portfolios are of a good standard. Learners spend a great deal of time on the records, and they are compiled well. Many employers allow learners time during working hours to update their training records or to produce drawings and charts.

43. Learners receive good support from their employers, supervisors and assessors. Mentors readily help learners to develop understanding by sharing their knowledge and experiences. Learners appreciate this support and feel part of a team in their workplace. If they cannot complete a particular mandatory element of their NVQ training in their work placement, Seleta TPS Ltd or the employer will arrange for them to work temporarily with another employer. One learner needed to gain experience in machining. His employer arranged for him to spend time at a local engineering workshop to accumulate the required evidence for his qualification. Seleta TPS Ltd's assessors spend part of their review visits assessing evidence gathered since the previous review. The technical content and cross-referencing of the evidence are discussed in great detail, and action plans are then compiled to be carried out before the assessor's next visit. Although some supervisors do not play an active role in the review process, the learner's action plan is discussed with them. Supervisors and mentors actively help learners to gather evidence and achieve their targets.

44. NVQ assessment practice is poor. Learners do not receive their NVQ portfolios or key skills assignments until late in their programme. Assessments by observation in the workplace are not carried out until after the learners receive their portfolios. Several learners who have been on programme for two years have not been given portfolios or had any assessments. Learners leaving the programme during their final year of training have not been credited with any unit completions. Although the assessment documents are satisfactory, some dates and learners' signatures are missing. There is no evidence of assessments being carried out since July 2003. Only one learner's portfolio was available for inspection. Assessors do not maintain duplicate records of any assessments carried out and do not have any assessment monitoring records. If a learner loses his portfolio there are no records available from which it can be recreated. Some learners are making slow progress. Three are now four months over their contractual period and still have not achieved. One has been on programme since 1997 and the other two since October 2000. Another learner has just completed his modern apprenticeship framework after being on programme since September 1998.

45. Learners' progress reviews are satisfactory, although some targets are not clear. Equality of opportunity is rarely discussed. Not all supervisors and mentors have sufficient knowledge of NVQs. Advanced modern apprentices have a satisfactory awareness of progression opportunities. They all attend college one day a week and know what additional courses are available in engineering. NVQ learners, however, have little idea of what they can do after they complete their qualification.

46. There is inadequate recording of learners' progress. There is no progress monitoring system for NVQ or key skills units. There are no records of NVQ learners' progress apart from those in their files. Most learners have completed application of number, communication, and IT key skills, although several need to resit failed tests. This is not recorded adequately enough to allow staff to monitor their progress. Learning plans are not fully completed and are not kept up to date. Assessors do not refer to learning plans during progress reviews. The learning plans do not contain target dates for units. The only dates recorded are programme completion dates. No occupational or key skills

units have been signed off as completed. In some learning plans, the dates of progress reviews have not been added. There are no references in the learning plan to the colleges attended by modern apprentices, or the qualifications being followed.

Leadership and management

47. The management of the engineering programmes is unsatisfactory, although newly appointed staff understand the problems and have begun to improve the monitoring of learners' progress. Staff meetings are informal and few are minuted. There are no regular staff meetings. Although targets are set for retention and achievement rates, no records are held to indicate how these targets were decided on. Seleta TPS Ltd does not manage or quality assure its subcontractors. Employers and learners are not asked regularly for their opinion of the training programmes. Internal verification is unsatisfactory. The main internal verifier for engineering left Seleta TPS Ltd in November 2003. Good records were maintained up to this time. Another internal verifier is temporarily carrying out this work, but records indicate that internal verification has only occurred once since 2003. There is no evidence of candidate discussions, or of observations of assessments. There are no clear records of learners' achievements. Self-assessment of this area of learning is poor. The self-assessment report contains insufficient information about the programmes and no data.

Information & communications technology

Information & communications technology		3
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
<i>Developing IT systems</i> - Work-based learning for young people	31	4
<i>Using IT</i> - Other government-funded provision	49	2

Developing IT systems

Strengths

- good teaching
- good resources to support learning
- very good pastoral support for learners

Weaknesses

- poor achievement on the NVQ programme
- weak assessment on the NVQ programme
- inadequate target-setting at reviews
- inadequate provision of work placements for the NVQ programme

Using IT

Strengths

- good teaching
- good progress on specialist short courses
- good resources to support learning
- very good pastoral support for learners

Weaknesses

- inadequate target-setting at reviews

Achievement and standards

48. Learners on specialist short courses make good progress. Learners on the 14-week course for computer technicians rapidly develop expertise in building, configuring and maintaining computers. They confidently install and repair operating system software and use their knowledge to connect basic computer networks. They are tested frequently, and perform well in the tests. Learners with areas of weakness are given additional help. The retention rate is good. Thirty-eight per cent of this year's learners

have already successfully completed the two external examinations to gain industry-recognised certification. Those still in learning are making good progress, and the maximum possible achievement rate for the year is 84 per cent. Over 60 per cent of those who complete the course progress to a network course for technicians. Attainment on this course is good, with learners building on their previous knowledge to connect, configure and fault-find on more complex networks. More than half the learners who have completed network courses have progressed to further short courses that provide professional recognition in areas such as computer network system administration. Learners on these courses exhibit a detailed understanding of setting up and controlling user access to networks. Of the 2003-04 intake, 78 per cent have either been retained or are still in learning.

49. On the NVQ programme, learners' practical computing skills and their knowledge of computing are satisfactory. Their portfolios are neatly constructed, following a standard pattern, and hold good evidence of the jobs and projects they are set. They use computers confidently and manipulate files with ease. Learners are competent in using word processing to present and illustrate their work, and in applying spreadsheet and database techniques to the solution of problems. Learners nearing the end of their course develop basic skills in visual programming, successfully applying their knowledge to design mouse-driven programmes to solve mathematical formulae or to control peripheral equipment. In key skills sessions, learners develop good understanding of employment issues, including employers' expectations. Their confidence and speaking skills improve and they are able to prepare and deliver good-quality presentations to their peers. Achievement in key skills is satisfactory, with half of those completing the course passing external tests in the three core skills.

50. The retention rate on the NVQ programme is satisfactory and improving. Of the learners who started 2001-02, 46 per cent were retained. Fifty-seven per cent of learners who started courses in 2002-03 have either been retained or are still in learning. All the learners recruited in 2003-04 are still in learning. Achievement on the NVQ programme is poor. It improved from 38 per cent in 2001-02 to a maximum possible 46 per cent in 2002-03.

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

LSC funded work-based learning																
NVQ Training																
	2003-04		2002-03		2001-02											
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number of starts	19		54		89											
Retained*	0		19	35	41	46										
Successfully completed	0		13	24	33	37										
Still in learning	19		12	22	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

Other government funded																
	2003-04															
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number of starts	129															
Retained*	51															
Successfully completed	51															
Still in training	49															

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

Quality of education and training

51. Teaching is good. Most of the sessions observed were graded good or better and none was unsatisfactory. Tutors demonstrate an awareness of their learners' preferred learning styles and vary their delivery accordingly. The pace in most sessions is good. In the best sessions, there is good participation by learners. Teaching of background knowledge is interspersed with periods of practical work, during which learners apply their new knowledge. There is often good checking of learning through careful questioning, although in some sessions too few questions were aimed at individuals. One session made good use of a quiz, so that learners could test each other's knowledge. In another session, learners were encouraged to comment constructively on the quality of other learners' presentations. Good use is made of the interactive teaching equipment and data projection facilities for demonstrations or to show good-quality slides. Teaching is carefully planned and scheduled, but insufficient attention is paid to learning outcomes.

52. There are good resources to support learning, and they are used well. There are comprehensive resources for teaching and training in ICT, including two well-equipped computer suites with industry standard software and data projection facilities. Computers are linked by wireless network, but one suite can be used for advanced training in computer networking using vendor-specific equipment. The computers can also be joined to the provider's own network for general use. A third computer suite is a designated online test centre for computer qualifications and a fourth provides learners with practical experience in building, upgrading and maintaining computers. There are two well-furnished lecture rooms, each with interactive teaching equipment. Tutors have appropriate vocational qualifications, but none hold teaching certificates. Learning materials for specialist short courses are good. Learners have adequate access to the internet in each computer room and tutors place copies of relevant research documents on the learners' network.

53. Pastoral support for learners is very good. A large proportion of learners have additional learning and social needs. For many, the ICT courses represent an opportunity to return to learning after unsuccessful or interrupted periods at school or college. There

are good working relationships between Seleta TPS Ltd's staff and learners. Tutors make themselves freely available to deal with learners' queries. Great emphasis is placed on helping learners overcome barriers to learning. They receive advice on housing, finance and personal health problems. Staff arrange for additional support from external agencies when necessary. They accompany learners, in their own time, to assist them with accommodation problems. Staff continue to help learners even after they have left their course. Counselling is arranged for learners who need it. There is close monitoring of learners' attendance at the centre and periods of absence are followed up promptly to determine the cause. Learners without access to a computer at home are able to attend the centre during their 'directed study' days. There is adequate support for learners with basic literacy and numeracy needs.

54. Initial assessment is satisfactory. All applicants for ICT courses undergo initial assessment of their basic skills, as well as a test of suitability for their proposed course. Selection is not dependent upon existing qualifications. Effective additional learning support is available at the centre for those diagnosed as being able to benefit from it. Successful applicants receive a thorough induction that clearly explains their programme and how they can obtain maximum benefit from it. There is very effective coverage of equality and diversity issues, with learners making knowledgeable contributions to discussions.

55. There is weak assessment on the NVQ programme. Staff mark learners' work regularly, although they do not comment in sufficient detail on how learners might improve their performance. On some learners' worksheets, incorrect calculations, spelling and grammar have been left uncorrected. On the NVQ course, learners' progress through their qualification is monitored using ticks and dates, but the level of performance is not recorded. Individual learning plans are regularly updated with learners' achievements, but learners are only given a copy of their plan on request.

56. There is inadequate target-setting at progress reviews. Learners' progress is checked every one or two months, although it is not always the same tutor who carries out the reviews. Review documents are insufficiently detailed. Learners' progress is described as being above, on or below target but the targets are not identified. A 'tick-box' approach is used to record learners' ability, application, quality of work and other factors. Reviews are not used to set short-term targets which would encourage learners to progress, nor do they note the distance travelled since the previous review. The space provided for recording the discussion of equality of opportunity is rarely used. Health and safety issues are not systematically discussed and recorded. Tutors add comments to the form and learners are invited to sign that they agree with the outcome of the review, but they are not invited to contribute their own views. Learners do not receive a copy of the review document.

57. Provision of work placements is inadequate. Seleta TPS Ltd's ICT provision is designed to prepare learners for careers in the computing industry. The computer engineering NVQ is not part of the framework specified by the IT sector skills council, but is one that can be awarded without the need for evidence of competence from the workplace. Emphasis is placed on providing learners with the practical experience of

building computers from scratch, installing operating systems and software, and upgrading them. Too little use is made of work experience to provide a real world perspective for learners. Seleta TPS Ltd has recognised this and has recently appointed a member of staff to assist placement of learners. The specialist short courses provide highly respected, industry-recognised certificates of competence. However, many employers still expect applicants to have job experience. Some learners have progressed through a number of the qualifications and have yet to secure employment in the industry. Others are successful in finding work, but there is no systematic analysis of this information.

Leadership and management

58. There is good informal communication between tutors and centre managers, but there is no evidence of formal meetings to review course performance or to set targets against which progress can be monitored. The self-assessment report correctly identifies some strengths and weaknesses in the provision but is insufficiently judgemental and provides no retention and achievement data. There is insufficient analysis of retention, achievement and progress by intakes or courses. Staff development is good and staff regularly update their qualifications. There is good management response to tutors' requests for learning materials and resources and a rapid, effective response to learners' requests for assistance. Internal verification is adequate. Learners' portfolios and assessment decisions are checked, but there are no detailed sampling plans.

Foundation programmes

Foundation programmes		4
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
<i>Employability/employment training</i> - Entry to Employment	26	4

Employability/employment training

Strengths

- very good, comprehensive personal support

Weaknesses

- inadequate initial assessment
- ineffective progress reviews
- unsatisfactory programme management

Achievement and standards

59. The E2E programme only began in August 2003. Fifty-seven per cent of the learners enrolled are still in learning, but Seleta TPS Ltd's data is insufficiently reliable to establish how many learners have achieved qualifications so far or how many have moved into employment or other training. Learners' attainment on the programme is unsatisfactory. Their written work is often unsatisfactory, and little is done to rectify this. Initial assessment fails to identify clear and appropriate short- and long-term individual targets for learners.

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

LSC funded work-based learning																
Entry to Employment																
	2003-04															
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number of starts	46															
Progression ¹	0															
Achieved objectives ²	0															
Still in learning	26															

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

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

Quality of education and training

60. Many learners on the E2E programme have complex and often difficult social and personal needs. Staff at Seleta TPS Ltd provide learners with very good support to overcome these. Learners trust staff and have developed very good working relationships with them. They have also had the opportunity to speak to employment staff who have come into classes. They speak highly of the personal support they receive. Many have made good progress, gaining in confidence and self-assurance.

61. Initial assessment is inadequate. It fails to identify clear targets and prepare individual learning. Targets are often generalised and it is difficult to measure learners' progress. Learners are not always aware of their individual learning goals. They often repeat writing exercises in classes but are given inadequate feedback to be able to clearly identify the improvements they have made. Comments on marked work are not always clear and constructive enough to lead to progress.

62. Learners' progress reviews are ineffective. They are often poorly recorded and insufficiently detailed. The review process focuses on personal and social issues but does not set learners clear short-term targets for other aspects of the programme. Feedback from all tutors is not always incorporated into the review process. The review does not clearly cover learners' progress in literacy, numeracy and language or set targets for further development. Learners are not sufficiently involved in the review process and there is no clear process for enabling learners to be self-critical and evaluate their own progress. Learners are uncertain of their overall learning objectives and are unable to measure their own progress. They do not keep copies of their individual learning plan or E2E passport.

63. Some of the training is ineffective. Lessons are unstructured, with insufficient consideration of the content, aims and objectives. Activities are often boring and fail to stimulate learning. The range of teaching techniques used is insufficient and little account is taken of individual learning needs or styles. Resources to support teaching are good, although insufficient use is made of additional learning materials and resources. For example, there are no posters on classroom walls and learners did not use dictionaries or other appropriate reading materials in the lessons observed. There is too much reliance on handouts which do not always meet individual learning needs and are sometimes ambiguous or difficult to understand.

Leadership and management

64. Programme planning has failed to ensure that all key elements of the E2E framework are adequately covered. Teaching on the programme is not contextualised. Literacy, numeracy and language skills are taught as a separate topic and not linked to other parts of the programme. No clear learning outcomes have been established for each aspect of the programme. There is insufficient monitoring of the quality of learning and inadequate ongoing checks of learning in classes. Attendance is monitored regularly, although lateness in classes is not always challenged. There are inadequate work placements or

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workplace experiences for learners to help them understand the requirements of employment. Management information is not used effectively to plan or improve the provision and some learners stay on the programme well beyond their funded completion date with little clear progress being made.