

INSPECTION REPORT

Training and Development Resources Ltd

17 September 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

Training and Development Resources Ltd

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INSPECTION REPORT

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROVIDER

1. Training and Development Resources Ltd (TDR) was established in 1998 as a company limited by guarantee and a registered charity. Its main base is on a trading estate in Gateshead. It provides training in engineering, mainly through subcontracted colleges. TDR also manages a small employer training pilot (ETP) programme.

2. The company is managed by a managing director. He reports to a board of directors made up of representatives from local manufacturing and engineering companies, schools and colleges. The company is split into three separate divisions, one dealing with workforce development which manages the ETP, another with the main modern apprenticeship training programme and the third with the schools liaison programme. There are 20 staff including the managing director. Three of these are managers of the individual divisions. On the modern apprenticeship programme there are six training co-ordinators whose responsibility it is to assess, support and review learners. Of these, one is responsible for equality of opportunity, one for health and safety, and one for quality assurance. The rest of the staff support the various teams with administrative, financial, marketing and schools liaison functions.

3. TDR funds its training through Tyne and Wear Learning and Skills Council (LSC). In the Tyne and Wear area, from which TDR recruits its learners, the proportion of the local population from minority ethnic groups is 3.2 per cent, according to the 2001 census, compared with 9 per cent nationally. Unemployment in the region is at 4 per cent, compared with 2.6 per cent nationally. The rate rises to 5.4 per cent in South Tyneside, one of the areas from which learners are recruited.

SCOPE OF PROVISION

Engineering, technology & manufacturing

4. There are currently 382 learners working towards advanced modern apprenticeships in engineering and 16 on foundation modern apprenticeships. All learners attend either one of four further education colleges or a major employer's training centre for 30 weeks off-the-job training to complete their national vocational qualification (NVQ) at level 2 and the key skills elements of their programme. Most learners are employed or gain jobs during this initial period of training. Following completion of the initial training, learners enter employment and work towards their NVQ at level 3.

5. In December 2002, TDR started some initial training for the ETP. There are currently 34 learners on this programme working towards an NVQ at level 2 in engineering production. All learners are employed, working for three local companies performing a range of engineering and manufacturing operations. TDR provides off-the-job training on employer's premises. They give training in performing manufacturing operations and warehousing, distribution and storage at NVQ level 2 through a subcontracted college.

All learners are recruited voluntarily onto the programme.

ABOUT THE INSPECTION

Number of inspectors	5
Number of inspection days	20
Number of learner interviews	64
Number of staff interviews	35
Number of employer interviews	17
Number of subcontractor interviews	14
Number of locations/sites/learning centres visited	12
Number of partner/external agency interviews	4
Number of visits	22

OVERALL JUDGEMENT

6. The quality of the provision is not adequate to meet the reasonable needs of those receiving it. More specifically, provision in engineering, technology and manufacturing is unsatisfactory as are leadership and management and the arrangements for quality assurance. Arrangements for equality of opportunity are 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
Other contributory areas		
- Work-based learning for young people	398	4
- Employer training pilot	34	3

KEY FINDINGS

Achievement and standards

7. **There is very good achievement of additional qualifications.** All learners achieve at least one additional qualification on the programme and develop good practical skills.

8. **There are good achievement and retention rates on the ETP programme,** at 70 per cent and 88 per cent, respectively. Retention and achievement rates for modern apprentices are poor. Of the 423 learners who started advanced modern apprenticeships between 1998 and 2000, only 142 have completed the full framework.

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
Engineering, technology & manufacturing	0	1	1	3	0	0	0	5
Total	0	1	1	3	0	0	0	5

9. **There is particularly good employer involvement on the programme.** They provide learners with a wide range of tasks to help them collect evidence to meet the requirements of the NVQ. Some learners are transferred to different departments to learn additional skills. For ETP learners, employers allow them to attend training sessions either in small groups or on an individual basis and time at work to compile portfolios.

10. **Informal communication with colleges are very effective.** There are regular meetings with college staff and action points are developed. In response to informal communications, improvements to courses have been made.

11. There is some poor assessment practice on the engineering production ETP programme. Assessor records are poorly detailed. Assessors help learners to answer questions.

12. **The planning of the learning process is inadequate.** Learners do not have detailed individual learning plans. The standards for the level 3 NVQ are not issued to many learners until 18 months or more after starting work. Assessment activity is not planned or recorded well. Learners are not adequately involved in planning learning. ETP learners have no individual learning plans.

13. **Progress reviews are insufficiently thorough.** Although most reviews contain targets for learners, these generally do not help learners to progress.

14. **Key skills training and assessment has been delayed for many advanced apprentices.** Some learners will not complete key skills until after the planned end date of their modern apprenticeship.

15. **TDR does not initially assess ETP learners.** There are no vocationally relevant initial assessments. Learners are not assessed for prior knowledge. No assessment is made of learners' literacy, numeracy or language support needs.

Leadership and management

16. **TDR has good external partnerships.** TDR is involved in network groups to raise awareness of its provision. There are good partnerships with employers to ensure learners have good access to employment.

17. **TDR has implemented some very effective actions to rectify weaknesses.** In direct response to learner feedback, the induction process was improved. Employers are now more directly involved with the recruitment process.

18. **TDR implements good initiatives to widen participation.** Staff work with community groups and attend network meetings. Learning materials are translated into languages other than English. Women-only taster courses are provided.

19. **The programmes to encourage learners to progress to modern apprenticeships are well developed.** A good range of schools are involved, some situated in areas of high deprivation. Progression from this programme into modern apprenticeships is good at over 50 per cent. Most other learners progress to higher education or other vocational options.

20. **Performance management is inadequate.** Management has identified that there are not enough formal methods to assess and evaluate the programmes effectively. Poor retention and achievement rates have not been tackled effectively.

21. **There is no clear strategic development of equality and diversity.** No actions are identified in the three-year development plan and yearly action plan. There is no overall staff training plan linked to business objectives and priorities.

22. **Monitoring of equality of opportunity in the workplace is inadequate.** Review paperwork used to monitor learners' understanding of equality of opportunity is not appropriate and contains poorly written questions. Progress review sheets do not record any additional relevant information.

23. **Quality assurance arrangements and procedures are incomplete.** Parts of the business are not covered by quality assurance arrangements. They do not cover the three strands of the business. Where quality assurance procedures are established they are inconsistently applied. Monitoring of subcontractors is inadequate. While they are visited frequently, information and actions are insufficiently formally recorded or monitored.

24. **Target-setting is weak.** Targets are not adequately evaluated or monitored. There are very few clear, measurable targets recorded in business plans, development plans and progress reviews. Targets are not set for retention and achievement rates.

25. Monitoring of subcontractors is inadequate. The service level agreements are not monitored effectively. Monitoring of teaching and learning is inadequate. There is not enough direct observation of teaching. TDR does not collect information on a systematic basis from colleges' own quality assurance systems.

Leadership and management

Strengths

- good external partnerships
- very effective actions to rectify weaknesses
- good initiatives to widen participation by under-represented groups
- well-developed pre-apprenticeship programme to improve progression to modern apprenticeships by learners

Weaknesses

- inadequate performance management
- no clear strategic development for equality and diversity
- inadequate monitoring of equality of opportunity in the workplace
- incomplete quality assurance arrangements and procedures
- weak target-setting
- inadequate monitoring of subcontractors

Engineering, technology & manufacturing

Other contributory areas

Strengths

- very good achievement of additional qualifications
- good development of practical skills
- good retention and achievement rates on ETP
- particularly good employer involvement
- very effective informal communications with colleges

Weaknesses

- poor retention and achievement rates for advanced apprentices
- inadequate planning of the learning process
- insufficiently thorough progress reviews
- delayed implementation of key skills for many advanced modern apprentices
- no initial assessment for ETP learners

WHAT LEARNERS LIKE ABOUT TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT RESOURCES LTD:

- being treated like an adult and not like at school
- working in-company and doing real work for employer or customers
- the good 'hands-on' training
- the fact that we don't just sit about in classrooms

WHAT LEARNERS THINK TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT RESOURCES LTD COULD IMPROVE:

- better training allowances at the subcontractor centre
- fairer access to travel allowances for all
- more visits and guidance on the NVQ at level 3
- better organisation of key skills
- clearer explanations of framework requirements
- getting through the qualification quicker

KEY CHALLENGES FOR TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT RESOURCES LTD:

- implement measures to improve performance management and target-setting
- fully develop quality assurance systems across all aspects of the programme and continually improve
- develop an effective equality and diversity strategy
- implement effective equal opportunities training for staff and learners
- plan learning in an holistic way with specific, measurable targets integrated with planned assessments
- improve the management of the learning process
- more effectively engage employers in the planning of learning
- implement sustained strategies to improve retention and achievement

DETAILED INSPECTION FINDINGS

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Grade 4

Strengths

- good external partnerships
- very effective actions to rectify weaknesses
- good initiatives to widen participation by under-represented groups
- well-developed pre-apprenticeship programme to improve progression to modern apprenticeships by learners

Weaknesses

- inadequate performance management
- no clear strategic development for equality and diversity
- inadequate monitoring of equality of opportunity in the workplace
- incomplete quality assurance arrangements and procedures
- weak target-setting
- inadequate monitoring of subcontractors

26. TDR has good external partnerships. The ETP was developed through partnerships between TDR, the LSC and local employers. There are effective links with 18 schools and 63 employers in the region to raise awareness of its provision and enable learners to gain academic qualifications in engineering. The management board of TDR is composed of representatives from many leading engineering businesses, schools and colleges. They are influential both regionally and nationally in commenting on the training needs of the industry. Partners from a range of engineering firms have recently worked together to provide long-term employment for learners.

27. TDR has implemented some very effective actions to rectify weaknesses in its provision. Feedback from learners and other partners is used well to improve the provision. For example, an ineffective tutor has been removed from teaching in one subcontractor in response to learner feedback. Effective teaching methods and learning aids are now used during learners' induction. Recruitment procedures have been restructured to better analyse learners' background knowledge and vocational skills. Much work has been done to ensure employers are fully committed to the employment of learners. A series of meetings have been held with employers to outline their responsibilities to the learners and to give them detailed information about the training. Through this work, 30 employed-status apprenticeships have been secured.

28. Financial management and the deployment of resources are satisfactory. The company is operating within its budget, which is managed centrally by senior managers and a small support team. Financial auditing is carried out by various national external

auditors and the company's auditors. The most recent audit took place in May 2004.

29. Staff appraisal training arrangements are satisfactory. Staff have a yearly appraisal. They self-assess before the appraisal and compare results with the appraiser. Targets are set and reviewed. Some target-setting is not sufficiently specific or measurable. However, other target-setting is very specific with completion dates. Staff training targets are closely related to the aims of the business.

30. Health and safety arrangements meet the needs of TDR. There is an appropriate health and safety policy as well as control measures to prevent and reduce risks, and effective arrangements for dealing with accidents including the provision of adequate first aid and a robust accident investigation capability.

31. The management information system is adequate. It produces monthly reports on retention and achievement rates. TDR has recently purchased a new software system to improve the monitoring of individual learners' progress, the framework requirements and awards.

32. Management of literacy and numeracy is satisfactory. The rigorous recruitment procedures include a nationally recognised computer-based assessment tool for basic and key skills. This ensures no learners with low literacy and numeracy skills needs are enrolled onto the programme. Any higher-level support needs are handled by the internal arrangements in each of the subcontractors. Less than 10 per cent of learners are on the ETP. These learners are not adequately initially assessed or provided with support for their literacy and numeracy needs. However, there are plans in place to rectify this issue.

33. Management of performance is inadequate. Management has identified that there are not enough formal methods to assess and evaluate the programmes effectively. Retention and achievement rates have been poor for several years, but these have not been adequately resolved. There is inadequate key skills training for some learners. The provider has also identified that there is some poor co-ordination of on- and off-the-job training. There is inadequate monitoring by board members of the training provision. They do not set corporate performance targets relating to recruitment, retention and achievement rates.

Equality of opportunity

Contributory grade 3

34. TDR has implemented good initiatives to widen participation by under-represented groups. Community leaders from a variety of minority ethnic groups are contacted. Using this professional help, marketing information is distributed to relevant groups. Through this work TDR had learning materials translated into another language to better target a specific local minority ethnic group. Staff attend community events and other meetings to raise awareness of the provision. Specific taster events for women are organised in partnership with local colleges and specialist organisations. A marketing plan is currently being developed to target groups in a more sustained way.

35. The programmes designed to encourage young learners to progress to modern apprenticeships are well developed. TDR works effectively with 18 schools and 63 employers, many in areas of high deprivation. Learners are able to gain credits towards the achievement of a modern apprenticeship while at school. Over 50 per cent of learners on these programmes progress onto modern apprenticeships. Other learners progress to higher education or other vocational options. Younger learners are now being targeted to raise awareness of engineering as a good career option at an earlier stage in their learning.

36. Learner support is satisfactory. Additional workplace visits are arranged by training co-ordinators for learners when required. An external organisation gives presentations at induction on support and guidance available on issues such as drug and alcohol misuse and homelessness. Subcontractor arrangements are in place to ensure learner support is provided in colleges. TDR keeps a referral list of relevant support agencies. Where learners are identified with dyslexia, appropriate advice is sought and used.

37. Equality of opportunity policies are satisfactory. They cover relevant legislation and are reviewed annually. Legislation is not always adequately updated. For example, amendments to the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 were not added to the policy at the appropriate time.

38. TDR does not have a clear strategy to develop equality and diversity. Although there is a three-year development plan and a yearly action plan, no actions are identified. Staff development in equality and diversity focuses on three members of staff who provide feedback to other staff at meetings on relevant issues. There is no overall staff training plan linked to business objectives and priorities. For example, no staff training has been given on literacy and numeracy skills and support, or social and economic barriers to learning or dyslexia. No regular, formal updated training is given on legislation changes. No training is given to help staff rectify specific situations in the workplace, such as challenging employers who display inappropriate material. While initiatives to widen participation are effective, they are not reviewed regularly to ensure continuous improvement.

39. The monitoring of equality of opportunity in the workplace is inadequate. The provider ensures employers have equal opportunities policies. However, review paperwork used to monitor learners' understanding of equality of opportunity is not appropriate and contains poorly written questions. Most progress review sheets do not record any additional relevant information. Learners do not have an adequate understanding of wider equality and diversity issues. Some learners do not understand the complaints procedure or how assessment decisions are made. Staff do not know how to discuss equal opportunities issues with the learners.

Quality assurance

Contributory grade 4

40. The quality assurance arrangements and procedures are incomplete. Parts of TDR's business are not covered by systematic quality assurance arrangements including the school link programme, the ETP and the commercial work that helps provide financial

support to training in other parts of the company. Where provision is covered by the quality assurance arrangements, the arrangements are inconsistently applied by staff. For example, staff use different paperwork in different parts of provision. Information collected during progress reviews is insufficiently monitored. Internal verification is unsatisfactory. Learners' portfolios do not contain enough assessor feedback on their work. Feedback from internal verifiers is not adequate. Sampling plans are in place but most internal verification takes place at the end of the programme. This approach is advised by the awarding body and the provider has complied with this advice.

41. Target-setting is weak. Targets are not adequately evaluated or monitored. There are very few clear, measurable targets recorded in business plans and progress reviews. Most training staff are not set targets for retention and achievement rates. Many targets comprise only statements of intent rather than specific, identified outcomes. The targets and criteria are not sufficiently detailed on what is to be achieved and how this is to take place.

42. There is inadequate monitoring of subcontractors. Service level agreements are in place, but these are not monitored effectively. There is inadequate formal review of teaching and learning provided by subcontractors. There is not enough direct observation of teaching. TDR does not collect information on a systematic basis from colleges' own quality assurance arrangements. For example, although the subcontractors have thorough internal teaching and learning observation schedules, TDR has no systematic processes to collect this information. Contract reviews by TDR's managers are ineffective. TDR does not clarify in sufficient detail how weaknesses identified by learners are to be rectified by the subcontractors. Where action does take place, it is not done on a formal basis or given a completion date. There is too much use of informal contact with subcontractors by training co-ordinators.

43. The self-assessment process is unsatisfactory. The most recent self-assessment report was produced in July 2004. All staff are involved in the process at team level. The process includes partners and subcontractors. However, the report is not sufficiently evaluative or self-critical. It did not identify many of the weaknesses identified by the inspectors.

AREAS OF LEARNING

Engineering, technology & manufacturing

Engineering, technology & manufacturing		4
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Other contributory areas		
- Work-based learning for young people	398	4
- Employer training pilot	34	3

Other contributory areas

Strengths

- very good achievement of additional qualifications
- good development of practical skills
- good retention and achievement rates on ETP
- particularly good employer involvement
- very effective informal communications with colleges

Weaknesses

- poor retention and achievement rates for advanced apprentices
- inadequate planning of the learning process
- insufficiently thorough progress reviews
- delayed implementation of key skills for many advanced modern apprentices
- no initial assessment for ETP learners

Achievement and standards

44. There is very good achievement of additional qualifications including higher national certificates, welding and abrasive wheels regulations, lift truck driving, construction site safety certificates, a computer aided design programme and a number of manufacturers' courses. All of these qualifications are additional to the requirements of the advanced modern apprenticeship framework. Where appropriate, many learners continue to higher education and a small number are on part-time degree courses. All learners achieve at least one additional qualification.

45. Learners develop a good standard of practical engineering skills and background knowledge. They work with confidence and competence in their work roles and use their own initiative in complex jobs. For example, one learner successfully redesigned their employer's welding bays to allow access for forklift trucks and lifting gear.

46. Achievement and retention rates for ETP learners are good. Of the 187 learners who started the programme, 70 per cent achieved level 2 qualifications in performing

engineering operations and engineering production. Thirty-four learners are still in learning. Retention rates are good. Of those who started the programme, 88 per cent have either completed or are still in learning. Those learners who have left the programme early either moved to other employment or are on long-term sick leave.

47. Retention and achievement rates are poor for advanced modern apprentices. Of the 423 learners who started advanced modern apprenticeships between 1998 and 2000, only 142 have completed the full framework, an achievement rate of 33 per cent. The current retention rate is 54 per cent. There have been no achievements between 2001 and 2003. TDR identified this weakness in its self-assessment report and has made some improvements. The retention rate for the most current intake of learners is 75 per cent.

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

LSC funded work-based learning																
Advanced apprenticeships																
	2003-04		2002-03		2001-02		2000-01		1999-2000		1998-99					
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number of starts	140		159		248		118		207		98					
Retained*	0		0	0	0	100	0	0	0	100	0	0				
Successfully completed	0		0	0	1	0	6	5	71	34	67	68				
Still in learning	105		82	52	109	44	59	50	24	12	3	3				

*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																
Apprenticeships																
	2003-04		2002-03		2001-02											
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number of starts	19		14		7											
Retained*	0		0	0	0	0										
Successfully completed	0		7	50	6	86										
Still in learning	14		2	14	0	0										

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

LSC funded work-based learning																
Employer training pilot																
	2003-04															
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number of starts	187															
Retained*	0															
Successfully completed	131															
Still in learning	34															

*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

48. There is particularly good employer involvement on the programme. Employers allocate learners to well-qualified and experienced engineers. They provide learners with a full range of personal protective equipment. Learners are given a wide range of tasks to help them collect evidence to meet the NVQ requirements. Learners who are apprentice technicians are transferred to different departments during their training to gain the required skills for their future work role. Many senior managers work directly with the learners. For ETP learners, employers work with TDR to develop a training programme that meets the needs of the company and the learners. Employers allow learners to attend training sessions either in small groups or on an individual basis. Many employers allow learners time to compile their portfolios.

49. There are very effective informal communications with colleges. Very regular meetings with college staff take place during which action points are developed. These action points are not formally monitored. In response to formal communications, improvements to courses have been made. For example, teaching staff have been changed and courses reorganised. The reporting of absences and timekeeping by subcontractors is good. Information on learners' progress is sometimes informal and is not systematically communicated clearly to either employers or learners.

50. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Of the five sessions observed by inspectors, all were satisfactory or better, with two being good or very good.

51. Resources are satisfactory. There has been recent investment in machine tools and in computers for key skills activities. College engineering workshops are satisfactory and classrooms for background knowledge are modern and well-equipped. Induction is satisfactory and is reinforced by additional employer information.

52. Support for learners is adequate. Training advisers manage a group of learners and meet with them at least every three months. Many learners receive a visit every eight weeks but this is not formally recorded.

53. ETP learners do not have individual learning plans. TDR uses a standard learning record that is updated on completion of the qualification. Assessors use documents with pre-printed action plans against which target dates are set.

54. There is some poor assessment practice on the ETP programme. The recording of assessor observations is insufficiently detailed. Assessors provide learners with too much help in answering questions. Some learners do not understand the process of portfolio-building. TDR is changing the structure and format of the learner assessments to rectify this issue.

55. The planning of the learning process is inadequate. Learners do not have detailed

individual learning plans. The standards for the level 3 NVQ are not issued to many learners until 18 months or more after starting work. Assessment activity is unsatisfactory. Workplace assessment for the level 3 NVQ is delayed until the final year of the modern apprenticeship. Assessments are not planned to fit in with the skills learners develop as they work in different departments. Many learners have to return to specific departments to complete work, sometimes up to a year later. Learners are visited regularly during their programme, but are not set enough specific targets. Recording of assessor activity is poor and many learners do not have enough evidence of assessment in their portfolios. Many learners are unsure about the requirements of their NVQ and are unclear about what evidence to collect. There is insufficient direct observation in the workplace. Additional assessment visits are not adequately planned.

56. Progress reviews are insufficiently thorough. Although most reviews contain targets for learners these generally do not help learners to make progress. Forward planning of reviews is satisfactory and all learners are informed in good time of their next review date. Where targets have been set, they are reviewed at the next visit. There is insufficient formal recording of the review process and TDR's staff are not kept up-to-date on learners' progress.

57. For many advanced modern apprentices there have been delays in the starting and completion of key skills. Some learners do not complete key skills until after their planned end date. Some learners have insufficient understanding of the requirements of key skills. TDR has made arrangements for all learners to complete outstanding key skills. There are not enough online key skills tests in the subcontract training centre for this process to be successful.

58. TDR does not initially assess ETP learners. There are no vocationally relevant initial assessments. Learners are not assessed for prior knowledge. No assessment is made of learners' literacy, numeracy or language support needs.

Leadership and management

59. There are regular team meetings with formal minutes and action plans. However, measures to improve retention and achievement rates are insufficiently rigorous. Learners' understanding of equality of opportunity is satisfactory. Learners are informed at induction on harassment, complaints and appeals processes. Many learners work in companies that have detailed policies and processes for equality and diversity. Learners have a good understanding of health and safety. There is insufficient reinforcement of equality of opportunity and health and safety during progress reviews. Internal verification arrangements are unsatisfactory. Monitoring of learner progress is satisfactory.