

REINSPECTION REPORT

KTS Training (2002) Limited Reinspection

09 July 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. 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
- the University for Industry's **learndirect** provision
- Adult and Community Learning
- learning and job preparation programmes 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.

REINSPECTION REPORT

KTS Training (2002) Limited Reinspection

Contents

Summary

Description of the provider	1
Scope of provision	1
About the reinspection	2
Overall judgement	2
Grades	2
Key findings	3

Detailed reinspection findings

Leadership and management	9
Equality of opportunity	10
Quality assurance	11
Business administration, management & professional	13
Retailing, customer service & transportation	16
Foundation programmes	19

REINSPECTION REPORT

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROVIDER

1. KTS Training (2002) Limited (KTS) is located in the Kingswood district of Bristol. In September 2002 the company was the subject of a management buy out by the current directors, removing it from the KTS Group. Since the previous inspection in May 2003 it no longer contracts with Jobcentre Plus for a foundation programme centre. Training in business administration, customer service, and information and communications technology (ICT) is still provided as well as an Entry to Employment (E2E) programme that was formerly Life Skills. Numbers of learners in customer service have increased since the previous inspection. At the time of the reinspection there were too few learners in ICT to be inspected separately.

2. KTS has a managing director and two senior managers. Four other managers have key responsibilities for aspects of training. There are nine full-time and five part-time staff. There are 79 learners most of whom are employed. All off-the-job training takes place at the company offices.

SCOPE OF PROVISION

Business administration, management & professional

3. KTS has five advanced modern apprentices, 22 foundation modern apprentices and two learners working towards a national vocational qualification (NVQ) in business administration. Just over one third of learners are employed and the rest are on work placements. Employers or work placements are mainly in the service, financial and business sectors. Learners are referred to KTS by Connexions or through direct contact with KTS, or other learners. Off-the-job training for technical certificates, key skills and information technology training takes place at KTS's premises. All other training is provided by employers. Assessors visit learners in the workplace every three weeks and their progress is reviewed every three months. There are four assessors and two internal verifiers.

Retailing, customer service & transportation

4. KTS has 17 learners working towards qualifications in customer service. Two learners are advanced modern apprentices and one is a foundation modern apprentice. The remaining 14 learners are working towards NVQs in customer service at level 2. Most learners are employed by national retail organisations when they start their programme. Induction and an initial assessment of literacy, numeracy and information technology (IT) skills are carried out in the workplace at the start of the qualification. Staff from KTS assess learners in the workplace. Employers provide on-the-job training while KTS's staff carry out off-the-job training for modern apprentices. Learners on NVQ programmes do not receive off-the-job training. A member of staff who is employed by KTS carries out progress reviews in the workplace every 12 weeks.

Foundation programmes

5. There are 29 learners on the E2E programme including five learners from the Life Skills programme. The E2E programme is designed to support young peoples' progress to employment or further education and/or training. Learners attend the centre for three days each week. The programme includes literacy and numeracy support, key skills training and social, personal and employability skills training. Learners take part in planned work experience or tasters in a variety of occupational areas with local employers. All training takes place at KTS's premises.

ABOUT THE REINSPECTION

Number of inspectors	5
Number of inspection days	24
Number of learner interviews	32
Number of staff interviews	21
Number of employer interviews	15
Number of locations/sites/learning centres visited	1
Number of visits	15

OVERALL JUDGEMENT

6. At the previous inspection in May 2003 the quality of learning in business administration and ICT was satisfactory. Foundation programmes were unsatisfactory. Leadership and management and the arrangements for quality assurance were unsatisfactory. Equality of opportunity was satisfactory. At the end of the reinspection, all aspects of the training provision were found to be satisfactory.

GRADES

Grades awarded at previous inspection

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
Business administration, management & professional	3
Contributory grades:	
Work-based learning for young people	3

Information & communications technology	3
Contributory grades:	
Work-based learning for young people	3

Foundation programmes	4
Contributory grades:	
Life Skills	4
Programme centres	4

Grades awarded at reinspection

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

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

Business administration, management & professional	3
Contributory grades:	
Work-based learning for young people	3

Retailing, customer service & transportation	3
Contributory grades:	
Work-based learning for young people	3

Foundation programmes	3
Contributory grades:	
Entry to Employment	3

KEY FINDINGS

Achievement and standards

7. **Learners gain a range of good professional skills in customer service.** Learners are now confident enough to deal with irate customers and complex transactions which they would have previously referred to their supervisors. Learners are motivated and have developed good communication skills.

8. Retention and achievement rates in business administration and customer service are satisfactory. Since the previous inspection, fewer learners are leaving early.

9. **E2E learners achieve a range of qualifications and awards.** They produce good

portfolios of work that are well presented and contain a wide range of evidence.

10. Completion of foundation modern apprenticeship frameworks is slow in business administration. Most learners expect to achieve within 18 months, but many learners have not finished one NVQ unit within six months of starting. Learners do not start their key skills portfolios until well into the year.

Quality of education and training

11. There is particularly effective understanding of learner and employers' needs in business administration. KTS carefully matches learners' needs to suitable work placements. Learners' career aims are also taken into account when they are placed. Job roles are well structured to enable learners to gather evidence for the NVQs easily. Learners adapt well to the requirements of job roles and responsibilities.

12. The induction is very effective. Learners have a good recall of the content of the induction, even when it took place some time ago. Learners have a good understanding of equality of opportunity and diversity. The induction prepares the learners well for their jobs. Learners gain a detailed awareness of the content and structure of their qualification and are confident in choosing appropriate optional units for their qualification.

13. Teaching in E2E programmes has improved since the previous inspection and is now good. Lessons are well planned and suitable teaching resources are available. Clear aims and objectives are shared with learners at the start of all lessons. Teachers devise and reproduce good learning materials that are relevant to learners' progression aims.

14. Resources are satisfactory. Most classrooms contain computers, printers and some also have scanners. All classrooms and corridors are well decorated. Learners also have a well-laid-out rest room with a computer games console to use in their free time. All staff are suitably qualified. Since the previous inspection new staff have joined KTS to teach E2E learners and all have a teaching qualification. These staff have a range of relevant experience of working with different groups of young people.

15. KTS has appropriate internal verification arrangements. It is now well planned and well recorded. For example, internal verification reports in customer service are detailed and provide assessors with the necessary support and guidance to improve assessment practice.

16. Arrangements to assess learners' literacy and numeracy skills are adequate. Diagnostic tests identify learners' support needs and modern apprentices complete further tests to identify support needs for their key skills. Initial assessment identifies individual learning styles for customer service learners, but these are not taken into account as part of their planned learning. E2E learners are set clear goals. All modern apprentices are on programmes that are appropriate to their job role.

17. **Since the previous inspection KTS has improved the range of activities for E2E learners.** Learners are now given opportunities to sample a variety of vocational areas through work experience. There are also visits to local colleges, employers premises and the local jobcentre. Learners also take part in social and sports activities.
18. **As recognised in the previous inspection there is particularly good pastoral support for E2E learners.** KTS has created a supportive environment within the centre where learners feel safe and are able to mix confidently with their peers. Learners are able to discuss personal matters confidentially with staff and appreciate the advice and guidance offered.
19. **Target-setting is poor in business administration and customer service.** Short-term targets are set which are specific and measurable, but learners find them easy to achieve. In business administration assessors do not set sufficiently demanding targets. They state only minimal requirements for the next assessment. In customer service, individual learning plans set only one target for completion of the entire qualification. Reviews rarely include interim challenging targets to help learners progress.
20. **Assessment practices are weak in customer service.** Assessment plans do not help the learners to prepare for assessment. There is an over emphasis on assessment through observation. Internal verification has identified these weaknesses and actions have been put in place to rectify them.
21. **In E2E there is insufficient identification of individual learning needs.** Those identified during the first eight weeks are not used effectively as the basis of an appropriate learning programme. Most key objectives on the individual learning programme relate only to the qualification. When other objectives are recorded there is little further reference throughout the review process.
22. **The recording of E2E learners' progress and achievement is weak.** There is insufficient formal systematic recording of the learners' vocational, personal and social skills. Progress review targets are not specific or clear and there are few comments.

Leadership and management

23. **KTS makes good use of the expertise of the management team.** Since the previous inspection KTS has effectively extended its management team from the managing director and head of training, to seven staff. Appropriate new appointments have complemented the skills of existing staff and the team now has a wide range of expertise. Decision-making has improved.
24. **Management information is good and is well used to monitor the quality of provision and plan improvements.** There is a weekly check of learners who are still on programme and a monthly analysis of retention and achievement by group and the reasons for leaving early. Feedback is collected and analysed from learners and employers through questionnaires.

KTS TRAINING (2002) LIMITED REINSPECTION

25. The provision for literacy and numeracy, a weakness at the previous inspection, is now satisfactory. A new company strategy has been devised and an action plan for its implementation has just been developed. An initial assessment diagnostic test has been introduced and most learners are receiving appropriate support.

26. Value for money is satisfactory. KTS ensures that major investments are well considered and will be of maximum benefit to the learner. A recent significant investment in IT equipment was carefully analysed before deciding which system to adopt.

27. **KTS has a wide range of effective strategies to improve awareness of equality and diversity.** Learners remember their induction which covers equality and diversity well. Learners receive a comprehensive handbook and they are clear about their rights and responsibilities. Focus groups are used effectively to gather learners' views. A new group of staff is meeting regularly to review equality and diversity issues. A new business development manager is checking employers' understanding of equality of opportunity. Effective partnerships have been formed to widen participation in learning.

28. **Positive action has been taken by managers to improve the quality of training since the previous inspection.** The quality assurance strategy and procedures, which were in place at the previous inspection, have been simplified and are more effective and better understood by staff. All recently appointed assessors and teaching staff have, or are in the final stages of, working towards a teaching qualification. An external consultant has carried out comprehensive observations of teaching and assessment and has produced a clear action plan for improvement. Internal verification of portfolios has improved since the previous inspection. Sampling of work for internal verification is well planned in all programme areas.

29. **There is greater employer involvement in learners' training programmes since the previous inspection.** A business development manager, who was appointed in January 2004, carefully matches learners to job vacancies and ensures employers are aware of their role, the learners' training needs and the content of the programme. Employers' involvement in the learners' progress review process has increased and is monitored by a senior manager.

30. The self-assessment process is satisfactory and has improved since the previous inspection. Staff are more involved, particularly through the extended management team. The process is more evaluative and self-critical and is now more central to quality improvement.

31. **Staff have an annual review of their training needs and opportunities are good.** Staff training for equality and diversity is satisfactory with some recent updating from an external consultant. Training for staff to recognise dyslexia has yet to be carried out.

32. **KTS does not have a formal system for assessing staff performance,** although there are plans to introduce it. Trainers' and assessors' performance is not measured against targets to improve the learners' experience or to ensure staff are working to their full

potential. For example, there are no retention and achievement targets for assessors and trainers, even though learners' progress is slow in business administration.

33. Monitoring of equality of opportunity in the workplace remains a weakness from the previous inspection. KTS requires employers to comply with equality and diversity, but do not formally check that employers are fully aware of their responsibilities. Ongoing monitoring is mostly done through questions, during reviews. However, these questions do not sufficiently extend learners' awareness or understanding. There are few recorded comments.

34. Target-setting was identified as a key weakness in foundation at the previous inspection and it is still inadequate and extends to all areas of learning. Targets for E2E learners are often too broad. They concentrate on the whole qualification and do not include enough personal goals. In business administration the targets are not demanding enough to encourage learners to achieve faster. Assessors' action plans do not contain specific targets to enable progress to be effectively measured. Some progress reviews are not specific or probing enough of the learners' current status and future need.

During the reinspection process, the inspectors identified the following strengths and weaknesses:

Leadership and management

Strengths

- good use of the expertise of the wider management team
- good use of management information
- wide range of strategies to improve equality and diversity
- positive action to improve the quality of training

Weaknesses

- insufficient assessment of staff performance
- insufficient monitoring of equality of opportunity in the workplace
- inadequate target-setting

Business administration, management & professional

Strengths

- particularly effective understanding of learners and employers' needs
- good portfolios

Weaknesses

- slow progress in completing the framework by foundation modern apprentices
- insufficiently demanding short-term targets for assessment

Retailing, customer service & transportation

Strengths

- good development of learners' professional skills
- very effective induction for learners

Weaknesses

- inadequate use of targets to help learners' progress
- weak assessment practice

Foundation programmes

Strengths

- good achievement of qualifications and awards
- good teaching
- particularly good pastoral support for individual learners

Weaknesses

- insufficient identification of learning needs
- weak recording of learners' progress and achievement

DETAILED REINSPECTION FINDINGS

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Grade 3

During the reinspection process, the inspectors identified the following strengths and weaknesses:

Strengths

- good use of the expertise of the wider management team
- good use of management information
- wide range of strategies to improve equality and diversity
- positive action to improve the quality of training

Weaknesses

- insufficient assessment of staff performance
- insufficient monitoring of equality of opportunity in the workplace
- inadequate target-setting

35. KTS makes good use of the expertise of the wider management team. Since the previous inspection, KTS has effectively extended its management team from two to seven staff. Appropriate new appointments have complemented the skills of existing staff and the team now has a wide range of expertise. Decision-making has improved. Strategic and operational management is now more closely linked. Staff have a clear understanding of the business and feel able to contribute to its success. Internal communication is good.

36. Management information is good and is well used to monitor the quality of provision and plan improvements. There is a weekly check on learners who are still in training and a monthly analysis of retention and achievement by group, and the reasons for early leavers. Feedback is collected from learners through questionnaires after induction, at six-monthly intervals during their programme and after the programme has finished. There are also monthly focus groups in E2E. Feedback is collected from employers at six-monthly intervals. However, the proportion of questionnaires returned from learners and employers is low. Plans are in place to offer incentives and to revise the method of distributing the questionnaires.

37. The provision for literacy and numeracy was a weakness at the previous inspection, but it is now satisfactory. A new company strategy has been devised with an action plan for its implementation. An initial assessment diagnostic test has been introduced and most learners are receiving appropriate support. Key staff have been identified to deliver training in literacy and numeracy and have already started specialist training. KTS is involved in a number of productive local partnerships. Partnerships with local community groups are beginning to take place but are at an early stage of development.

38. KTS ensures that major investments are well considered and will be of maximum benefit to the learner. A recent significant investment in IT equipment was carefully analysed before deciding which system to adopt.

39. Staff have an annual review of their training needs, and staff development opportunities are good. There is no formal system for assessing staff performance, although there are plans to introduce it. Trainers' and assessors' performance is not measured against targets to improve the learners' experience or to ensure staff are working to their full potential. For example, there are no retention and achievement targets for assessors and trainers even though learners' progress is slow in business administration. Job descriptions are in place for most job roles but senior managers have yet to review them to reflect changes in responsibilities and to the business.

Equality of opportunity

Contributory grade 3

40. KTS has a wide range of effective strategies to improve awareness of equality and diversity. Learners remember their induction which covers equality and diversity well. Quizzes are used effectively to test their understanding. Results are reviewed and there is good follow up where learners have misunderstood certain aspects. Learners value the comprehensive handbook which outlines equality of opportunity, including the complaints and grievance procedure. Learners are confident and clear about their rights and responsibilities and many have a broad understanding of diversity. Focus groups continue to be used effectively to gather learners' views and opinions. For example, KTS has purchased a computer games console and television which learners use in their free-time in the rest room. A new group of staff meets regularly to discuss equality and diversity. A new business development manager carefully checks that employers are committed to equality and diversity in the workplace before they are used for training. Effective partnerships have been developed to widen participation. For example KTS is a member of the E2E training provider group and has been involved in offering taster days to local schools. Other work is being done to build on informal networks or previous experience with drugs misuse awareness and sexual health.

41. Policies and procedures include all relevant legislation. Since the previous inspection there have been revisions and updates to the policy, and the procedures now include comprehensive information about harassment and bullying. Responsibilities are well defined. A well-written section explains what could constitute discrimination and how it would apply to staff and learners. Additional information has been written such as lists of questions to be asked at reviews, and a statement about KTS's commitment to inclusion, but neither of these are dated. It is not clear whether these will be included in the procedures for equality and diversity.

42. Statistics are collected to monitor equality of opportunity. Discussions take place at meetings and some targets have been set. The proportion of learners from minority ethnic groups is higher than the local population.

43. Staff development and training is satisfactory with some recent updating from an

external consultant. Evaluations have been completed but these have yet to be analysed, or the impact on training discussed. Training for staff in dyslexia awareness has yet to be carried out. Learners are well supported and additional support is organised effectively when a need arises.

44. Monitoring of equality of opportunity in the workplace remains a weakness. KTS requires employers to comply with equality and diversity, but do not formally check that employers are fully aware of their responsibilities. Ongoing monitoring is mostly carried out through questions during reviews. However, these questions do not sufficiently extend learners' awareness or understanding. There are few recorded comments. Most placements for E2E learners are organised through an external agency and KTS matches the learner's aims and requests appropriately. KTS does not formally check that the employers have equality of opportunity policies. However, the external agency requires signed confirmation that employers which are used for placements are committed to equal opportunities. The booklet learners are given about work experience does not make explicit reference to equality of opportunity.

45. Access for people with restricted mobility is not possible through the front entrance. However, signs have been improved to help those people gain access through a side entrance.

Quality assurance

Contributory grade 3

46. Managers have taken positive action to improve the quality of training since the previous inspection. The quality strategy and procedures, which were in place, have been simplified and are now more effective and better understood by staff. All recently appointed assessors and teaching staff have, or are in the final stages of, working towards a teaching qualification. An external consultant has carried out comprehensive observations of teaching and assessment and produced a clear action plan for improvement. Internal verification of portfolios has improved since the previous inspection. Sampling of work for internal verification is well planned in all programme areas and covers all units, including those which are optional. Feedback to assessors is comprehensive and actions are followed up to ensure completion. Observations of training and assessment in the workplace are not well developed. However, the external consultant has started to carry these out.

47. Employers are more involved in learners' training programmes since the previous inspection. A business development manager was appointed in January 2004 and they carefully match learners to job vacancies and ensure employers are aware of their role, the learners' training needs and the content of the programme. This is effectively reinforced in a follow-up visit. Employers' involvement in the progress review process has increased and is monitored by a senior manager.

48. The self-assessment process is satisfactory and has improved since the previous inspection. Staff are more involved, particularly through the extended management team. Better use is made of learners' and employers' views. The report is now more evaluative and self-critical and is more central to quality improvement.

49. Target-setting was identified as a key weakness in foundation at the previous inspection, and it is still inadequate and extends to all areas of learning. Targets for E2E learners who are studying literacy and numeracy are often too broad. They concentrate on the whole qualification and do not include enough personal goals. In business administration the targets are not challenging enough to encourage learners to achieve faster. Assessors' action plans do not contain specific targets to enable progress to be measured. A computerised monitoring programme is used effectively to check reviews take place at 12-weekly intervals. However, some of the progress reviews are not specific or probing enough of the learners' current status and future needs. Although progress reviews are monitored this has not led to a significant improvement. Actions identified through the monitoring process are not always checked for completion. Meetings take place every two weeks to discuss reviews. However, one person carries out all the reviews so there is little opportunity to discuss and share good practice.

AREAS OF LEARNING

Business administration, management & professional

Grade 3

Programmes inspected	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Work-based learning for young people	29	3

During the reinspection process, the inspectors identified the following strengths and weaknesses:

Strengths

- particularly effective understanding of learners and employers' needs
- good portfolios

Weaknesses

- slow progress in completing the framework by foundation modern apprentices
- insufficiently demanding short-term targets for assessment

Achievement and standards

50. Learners gain good practical skills, which they use competently in the workplace. They are self-confident, work well in teams and show good interpersonal skills.

51. Retention and achievement rates are satisfactory. Since the previous inspection fewer learners are leaving early without achieving the targets on their individual learning plan. Since 2002-03, three of the 31 foundation modern apprentices have completed the framework and 21 are still in learning. None of the advanced modern apprentices have left since 2002-03. Completion of foundation modern apprenticeship frameworks is slow. Most of the learners expect to achieve within 18 months, but many have not completed one NVQ unit within six months of starting. Learners do not start key skills portfolios until well into their training year. KTS has recognised this weakness and some learners are beginning to gather evidence for key skills at an earlier stage. All learners are completing technical certificates quickly.

Quality of education and training

52. KTS understands the needs of learners and employers particularly effectively. Learners attend a comprehensive interview to help them decide which programme to work towards. This interview is also used to match the learners' needs to a suitable work placement. Learners' career aims are taken into account when they are placed. KTS understands the employers' requirements and job roles clearly. Job roles are well-structured to enable learners to gather evidence for the NVQs easily. Learners adapt well to the requirements of job roles and responsibilities. One learner has beneficially

KTS TRAINING (2002) LIMITED REINSPECTION

changed work practices and increased the efficiency of the business. Since the previous inspection communication with work-placement supervisors has improved and employers are much more involved in the training process. Employers are now formally involved in the 12-weekly reviews, are fully aware of learners' progress and identify concerns promptly.

53. Portfolios continue to be good. They are well structured with clearly marked sections which are methodically laid out. A separate portfolio is used for key skills evidence using the same well-structured format. Some of the key skills evidence is cross-referenced to the NVQ. Individual learning plans have improved since the previous inspection and now contain sufficient detail about the training programme. Long-term targets are included for key skills and technical certificates. However, they do not contain medium-term targets. Portfolios include a wide range of evidence for NVQs, technical certificates and key skills. Observation and coaching records are very detailed. There is a particularly effective system for identifying assessed and internally verified work. When evidence is assessed or internally verified, a unique ink stamp is used to distinguish the assessor or internal verifier easily.

54. Learners attend KTS's premises every two weeks for background knowledge training for technical certificates or key skills. The standard of teaching is satisfactory. Teaching is well structured and links topics to work situations. New concepts are clearly explained. Learners practise new techniques to improve the quality of evidence in their portfolio. Teachers regularly and effectively check learners' understanding.

55. Initial assessment is carried out at the start of the programme. Individual learners' needs are identified, and literacy and numeracy needs are well supported. Supervisors and teams in the workplace also support learners well. Learners are an integral part of the workforce, and develop a good knowledge of work practices. KTS responds effectively to learners' personal needs. One learner who was experiencing legal problems was supported by KTS and the employer was advised of the situation. A learner who was bullying another learner was dealt with quickly by KTS.

56. KTS has appropriate assessment practices. Internal verification records are satisfactory and the sampling techniques are appropriate. Learners are assessed every three weeks. Evidence is gathered from a wide range of sources and is work-based. Learners are given good information on sources of current and relevant evidence. Good feedback is given to learners.

57. Assessors do not set sufficiently demanding short-term targets during assessment visits. Action plans are detailed with good records of evidence requirements. However, short-term targets do not effectively challenge most learners and are too easy to achieve. They state only minimal requirements for subsequent assessment.

Leadership and management

58. Questionnaires are sent to learners and employers at six-monthly intervals to monitor the quality of the training. However, questionnaires are not comprehensive enough to give a detailed view of performance. Quality assurance arrangements are satisfactory. A monthly analysis of achievement and retention rates has been introduced to set action plans for improvement. Learners' understanding of equal opportunities is adequate. Reviews are used to check that learners do not have problems, but review records do not show how equality and diversity is being reinforced. Written comments are minimal.

59. Resources are appropriately managed. Individual staff performance is regularly appraised and appropriate development plans are produced. Recently, teachers have received detailed feedback following observations of their lessons. Assessors and internal verifiers meet regularly to share good practice.

60. There has been greater staff involvement in the self-assessment process. The self-assessment report is sufficiently evaluative and broadly matched the inspectors' findings. However, some strengths are no more than normal practice. Improvements have been made since the report was written.

Retailing, customer service & transportation**Grade 3**

Programmes inspected	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Work-based learning for young people	17	3

During the reinspection process, the inspectors identified the following strengths and weaknesses:

Strengths

- good development of learners' professional skills
- very effective induction for learners

Weaknesses

- inadequate use of targets to help learners' progress
- weak assessment practice

Achievement and standards

61. Learners gain a range of good professional skills. Employers and learners recognise the significant increase in learners' self-confidence during their training programmes. Learners are now confident enough to deal with irate customers and complex transactions which they would previously have referred to their supervisors. Learners are motivated and have developed good communication skills. There is good on-the-job training at some employers where learners are able to take advantage of internal training materials dealing with the development of their customer service skills. However, this is not always used as evidence for the learners' portfolios. Learners are able to analyse and evaluate their performance and look at ways to improve customer service in their daily activities. Learners recognise that their tasks have an impact on the working practices of their colleagues who they now recognise as valued internal customers. Learners appreciate the value placed on their learning programmes within their personal development. This strength was partially recognised in the self-assessment report.

62. Retention and achievement rates are now satisfactory. In 2002-03, 64 per cent of learners on NVQ programmes achieved their qualifications and a further 9 per cent remain in learning. Fifty per cent of foundation modern apprentices achieved their full qualification, and none remain in learning. Of the 26 NVQ learners who started in 2003-04, 13 remain in learning and two have already achieved their qualification. Learners that are currently working towards qualifications are making satisfactory progress.

Quality of education and training

63. Learners have a very effective induction. Learners have a good recall of the content of the induction even when it took place some time ago. Health and safety is covered well and learners are able to relate this to their individual workplace. Progress reviews reinforce their knowledge of health and safety. Learners have a good understanding of equality of opportunity and diversity, and are fully aware of their rights in the workplace and the procedures for appeals and complaints. The induction prepares the learners well for their jobs. Learners gain a detailed awareness of the content and structure of their qualification and are confident enough to choose appropriate optional units for their qualification. Learners are given a detailed support pack and handbook which they use as reference documents. Learners receive a satisfactory level of support and guidance throughout their training programme.

64. The arrangements to assess learners' literacy and numeracy skills are adequate. Diagnostic tests identify learners' support needs and those starting a modern apprenticeship complete further tests to identify support needs for their key skills. Although learners are given the marks for these tests, they do not know how they were awarded and are unaware of areas of development. Initial assessment identifies individual learning styles, but these are not taken account of as part of the individuals' planned learning. None of the learners have additional learning or social needs. Learners are on programmes that are appropriate to their job role.

65. Resources for learning are satisfactory. Assessors and learners are able to discuss and agree assessment feedback and action plans in appropriate locations in the workplace. There is limited use of support materials and publications to support learning, although all learners are given learner support books. Off-the-job training is appropriately planned and delivered to modern apprentices by KTS's staff. However, most learners are following NVQ programmes and do not attend off-the-job training sessions.

66. Targets for learner progression are inadequate. This weakness was recognised in the self-assessment report. The individual learning plans set only one target for completion of the entire qualification. This is usually the end of the funding period and does not take into account individual learners' needs. Progress reviews rarely measure progress against targets and do not set any challenging interim targets to assist learners' progression. As learners approach the end of their qualification and assessors realise the previous target date of achievement is inaccurate, it is changed. However, this is not done on a systematic basis and is not reviewed throughout the programme. Specific and measurable short-term action plans are set at each visit, but they are too easy for some learners.

67. Assessment practices are weak. However, internal verification systems have identified this and action has been taken to rectify them. Assessment plans do not help learners to prepare for assessment. There is an over-emphasis on assessment through observation and little use is made of witness testimonies, professional discussion,

candidate reports or case studies. Assessors write detailed reports following observations of learners' performance of work activities and these are usually linked appropriately to the NVQ. When witness testimonies are used they are often a pre-printed version of the national standards followed by a statement of competent performance. Internal verifiers have recognised this inadequacy and it has been discussed at standardisation meetings.

68. Key skills are worked on throughout the programme. There are sufficient assessors and verifiers for the current number of customer service learners. The main assessors and verifiers are self-employed and work for KTS on a part-time basis. They have appropriate qualifications and relevant occupational experience which is updated. Assessors give mobile telephone numbers to learners. When necessary, they arrange appointments for weekends to ensure that they can observe a busy trading period.

Leadership and management

69. New comprehensive measures to deal with previously identified problems have been recently introduced. In some areas such as internal verification, these measures have already brought about some improvements. Internal verification is now well planned and well recorded. Reports are detailed and provide the assessors with the necessary support and guidance to improve assessment practice. New assessors are given sufficient support by an internal verifier. However, in other areas there has been insufficient time for the recent changes to have had a positive effect on the learners' experience. Learners have a good understanding of equality of opportunity and diversity. This is a significant part of the learners' induction, which they recall well. There is insufficient monitoring of this in the workplace, although progress reviews have recently been amended to include basic questions on equality.

70. Resources are used effectively and are appropriate for the occupational area. Communication between staff in the area is satisfactory. There have been significant improvements in communication between KTS and employers and most employers now have at least a satisfactory involvement in the learners' training.

71. Staff are actively involved in the self-assessment process, and the views of employers and learners were also included. Feedback is collected from learners and employers on a regular basis, either as part of the progress review or through specific questionnaires. The self-assessment report is open and honest, but is not sufficiently self-critical, with many of the strengths being no more than normal practice.

Foundation programmes**Grade 3**

Programmes inspected	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Entry to Employment	29	3

During the reinspection process, the inspectors identified the following strengths and weaknesses:

Strengths

- good achievement of qualifications and awards
- good teaching
- particularly good pastoral support for individual learners

Weaknesses

- insufficient identification of learning needs
- weak recording of learners' progress and achievement

Achievement and standards

72. There is good achievement of qualifications and awards. Since the previous inspection many learners have achieved a range of qualifications and awards. Nine learners have achieved key skills communication at level 1 and six at level 2. Five learners have achieved key skills application of number at level 1 and three at level 2, and 11 learners achieved an IT qualification. Additionally 24 learners achieved a food hygiene award and 20 learners achieved a first aid award. Learners' progression to employment or further education and/or training is satisfactory.

73. Learners produce good portfolios which are well presented and contain a wide range of evidence. Key skills portfolios contain good examples of assignments. Teachers routinely mark portfolios and add constructive notes to enable learners to improve. Learners take great pride in their work.

Quality of education and training

74. Teaching has improved since the previous inspection and is now good. Lessons are well-planned and suitable teaching resources are available. Clear aims and objectives are shared with learners at the start of all lessons. Teachers devise and reproduce good learning materials that are relevant to learners' progression aims. Learning materials are designed to take account of learners' needs. Teachers make good use of whole group, small groups and individual teaching to keep learners interested. Teachers now use a wide range of teaching techniques and equipment to support learning. In one session the trainer used a well-planned presentation using a computer software programme. There is good use of ICT in many lessons. For example, in one lesson learners completed

KTS TRAINING (2002) LIMITED REINSPECTION

a spreadsheet and made a range of calculations using information obtained by watching part of a feature film. Teachers also use information compiled by learners from other lessons. Learners used the scores of a previous ten-pin bowling activity as the basis for calculating averages and mean values in a numeracy lesson. In less successful lessons teachers do not link the lessons and insufficient use is made of good learning activities.

75. As recognised in the previous inspection there is particularly good pastoral support for individual learners. KTS has created a supportive environment in the centre where learners feel safe and are able to mix confidently with their peers. Learners are able to discuss personal matters confidentially with staff and appreciate the advice and guidance offered. KTS's staff were able to arrange temporary housing following discussions with the local authority for one learner who was homeless. The learner is now in full-time employment. KTS helped another learner who was receiving disability allowance gain employment following discussions and assistance from a national agency which specialises in supporting disabled people into work. Staff give learners their mobile telephone numbers and e-mail addresses to enable them to make contact out-of-hours. Staff have good links with external agencies and regularly arrange for guest speakers to visit the centre to offer specific advice and guidance. These include drug, alcohol and personal health awareness sessions, police and a local charitable trust that supports young people in employment. Some learners have had specific support to help them travel independently.

76. Literacy and numeracy support is satisfactory. Initial screening and subsequent diagnostic assessments are comprehensive and thorough, and clear goals are identified for learners. KTS has arranged for the few learners with dyslexia to attend classes at a local authority centre which specialises in this kind of support.

77. Resources are satisfactory. Staff have a range of qualifications and all have recently gained relevant teaching qualifications. This was a weakness at the previous inspection. Staff have experience of working with groups of young people in a variety of situations. There is a good information learning technology suite with internet access and suitable software. Most classrooms have computers and printers, and some have scanners installed. Learners have good access to these facilities during learning sessions and during their breaks. Learners have their own common room and facilities to make hot drinks. The centre is well maintained and well kept.

78. Since the previous inspection KTS has improved the range of activities for learners. Learners are given opportunities to sample a variety of occupational areas through work experience and tasters. They have recently taken part in work experience in the reception area of a local taxi company, a knives manufacturer, a retail outlet, a health and fitness centre and a travel agency. Learners take part in other activities which are designed to improve their self-confidence, independent living skills and motivation. Learners visit local colleges, employers and the local jobcentre. They also take part in other activities including visits to local museums, ten-pin bowling, ice skating, climbing, swimming and football. These activities promote teamwork, self-confidence and independent travel. There are a number of new initiatives which include learning basic carpentry at a local furniture project, a creative writing course, film making and a bicycle

maintenance course at a local community centre.

79. As at the previous inspection there is insufficient identification of individual learning needs. Individual learning needs, including those for literacy and numeracy support, are identified during the first eight weeks but are not used effectively as key objectives and do not form the basis of an appropriate learning programme. Most key objectives relate only to the achievement of accredited qualifications. Where other objectives are recorded there is little further reference throughout the review process.

80. The recording of learners' progress and achievement is weak. Learners achieve a wide range of vocational, personal and social skills during the programme. However, there is little formal, systematic recording of learners' progress and of achievement of these skills. Progress review targets are not specific or clear and few comments are included. Reviews of progress and achievement for specific literacy and numeracy targets are not adequately recorded and learners are unable to celebrate their successes routinely.

Leadership and management

81. Many members of staff concerned with the delivery of the E2E programme have joined the provider in recent months. All training staff now have a suitable teaching qualification and the co-ordinator is to take a level 4 literacy teaching certificate. Staff work well as a team and routinely share good practice. They have developed and introduced a range of new initiatives to improve the programme and learners' experiences. However, some initiatives are quite new and it is too early to judge their impact. The quality of teaching has improved since formal observations have started and teachers now receive good detailed feedback. The self-assessment report identified some strengths and weaknesses, but others identified were found to be no more than satisfactory.