

INSPECTION REPORT

North London Garage Group Training Association

08 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 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

North London Garage Group Training Association

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INSPECTION REPORT

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROVIDER

1. The North London Garage Group Training Association (NLGGTA) was formed in 1970 by a group of local garage owners, in association with an industrial training board. In 1983, involvement with the training board ceased and the association has employed its own staff since then. The group's management committee meets at least once each year and consists of representatives from each member company. The management committee elects a board, which meets quarterly to monitor performance and future initiatives. The chairman of the association meets each week with the chief executive officer to supervise the operational management of the group. The association maintains contact with more than 130 employers in the motor vehicle trade across north London. The association has 19 staff, of whom 14 work full time. NLGGTA is based on an industrial trading estate in Ponders End, Enfield, and moved there in April 2004. The building contains a suite of management and administration offices, and five classrooms and workshops for training leading to national vocational qualifications (NVQs) in lift truck operation and motor vehicle servicing. NLGGTA also subcontracts training to four further education colleges, three in London and one in the West Midlands.

2. At the time of the inspection, NLGGTA provides work-based learning for 200 learners through contracts with London North Learning and Skills Council. It also provides commercial basic training in lift truck operations. Of the 200 learners, there are 119 advanced modern apprentices, 48 foundation modern apprentices and seven who are completing NVQs at level 2. A further 26 learners are on an Entry to Employment (E2E) programme in preparation for employment in motor vehicle trades.

3. The London North LSC area includes the boroughs of Enfield, Haringey, Waltham Forest and Barnet. Unemployment rates within the boroughs vary from 2.6 per cent in Barnet to 4.1 per cent in Waltham Forest, compared with a national figure of 2.3 per cent and 3.4 per cent for Greater London. The 2001 census identifies that the proportion of the population from minority ethnic groups varies from 22.9 per cent in Enfield to 35.5 per cent in Waltham Forest, compared with a London average of 28.8 per cent and a national average of 9 per cent. Within the London North LSC area, the proportion of young people aged 16 leaving school to enter either employment or government-funded training is 20 per cent, which is significantly below the national average of 29 per cent.

SCOPE OF PROVISION

Engineering, technology & manufacturing

4. NLGGTA provides training for 173 learners in motor vehicle engineering, of whom 119 are advanced modern apprentices and 48 are foundation modern apprentices. Advanced and foundation modern apprentices study for a variety of NVQs in vehicle maintenance and repair (light and heavy options) and body and paint operations. Four modern apprentices are working towards NVQs at level 2 in retailing operations. Two learners are

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working towards NVQs at level 2 in vehicle fitting. The company recruits learners through a variety of methods, including referrals from employers or Connexions, its own promotional activities, and liaison with two local subcontractor colleges. An increasing number of learners apply direct, through NLGGTA's website or by personal recommendation.

5. In addition to NLGGTA's own training centre, the company subcontracts with four colleges and one heavy goods maintenance company for the delivery of training. All learners are employed. There is a wide variety of work placements throughout north and northeast London and Essex, which include main dealers of prestigious vehicles, specialist light vehicle repairers, heavy goods maintenance companies, small garages and fast-fit tyre and exhaust centres. Off-the-job training is provided at a local heavy goods company's premises, NLGGTA's training centre, or at subcontracted colleges on one day each week. Learners attending colleges do so for 36 weeks each year and those attending NLGGTA's training centre or the heavy goods company do so for 40 weeks each year. Preparation for key skills examinations is provided during these weeks of off-the-job training. The company employs four training officers/assessors, four full-time lecturers and one part-time lecturer, one workshop instructor and one workshop technician. All teaching staff are industry experienced, vocationally qualified and have, or are working towards, teaching or assessors' qualifications.

Foundation programmes

6. There are 26 learners in the foundation area, all of whom are on E2E programmes. Local Connexions offices select learners who have expressed an interest in motor vehicle work. NLGGTA uses initial assessment to determine if learners are able to take a modern apprenticeship or if an NVQ at level 1 is more appropriate. The E2E learners are working towards NVQs at level 1 in motor vehicle fitting (fast fit). Learners also develop their skills in literacy and numeracy. For the first 26 weeks of their programme, the learners spend three days each week in training at NLGGTA's training centre. They spend one day in practical exercises in the training workshop, one day studying background knowledge for the NVQ, and one day developing their literacy and numeracy skills. As soon as it can be arranged, the learners spend two days each week in work placements. An NLGGTA assessor visits them in their work placements to assess their practical work for the NVQ. After the initial 26 weeks on the E2E programme, learners continue to collect evidence and be assessed at their work placements, which they attend for five days each week. Some of them are offered additional support for their vocational qualification on one day each week at NLGGTA's training centre.

ABOUT THE INSPECTION

Number of inspectors	6
Number of inspection days	24
Number of learner interviews	48
Number of staff interviews	30
Number of employer interviews	20
Number of locations/sites/learning centres visited	26

OVERALL JUDGEMENT

7. The quality of the provision is not adequate to meet the reasonable needs of those receiving it. Work-based learning for young people in engineering, technology and manufacturing is unsatisfactory, as is the association's provision for foundation learners. NLGGTA's leadership and management, quality assurance and equality of opportunity arrangements are unsatisfactory.

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		4
Quality assurance		4

Engineering, technology & manufacturing			4
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade	
<i>Motor vehicle/cycle</i>			
- Work-based learning for young people	173	4	

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. Learners in motor vehicle engineering gain good practical and diagnostic skills.

Employers are positive about the level and standard of the training and compliment the learners on their practical skills. Many learners develop high levels of competence and confidence and take increasing responsibility to work on customers' vehicles using a wide range of sophisticated diagnostic equipment. Many learners work in main dealerships and frequently work on high-value, prestigious vehicles.

9. The E2E programme has been developed over the past 12 months by modifying a previous NVQ at level 1 in motor vehicle engineering. All E2E learners work towards an NVQ at level 1 in motor vehicle engineering and also spend one day each week improving their literacy and numeracy skills. Although learners are making steady but slow progress in achieving individual units of their NVQ, no unit accreditation has been sought.

10. Many learners in motor vehicle engineering make slow progress towards the completion of their NVQ and the modern apprenticeship framework. NLGGTA makes insufficient use of the good assessment opportunities provided by the workplaces.

11. Learners' progress in improving their literacy and numeracy skills is poor. NLGGTA does not accredit other types of achievement, such as improvements in the content of the course, and develop learners' broader skills insufficiently. Learners spend two days each week in carefully selected workplaces during the first 26 weeks of their programme and then move to a placement of five days each week until they find employment or leave the scheme. This pattern is similar for all learners, regardless of their needs or experience. Learners gain good vocational skills in the workplace and express high levels of satisfaction with the practical training.

Quality of education and training

12. Of the seven learning sessions observed, five were satisfactory or better.

13. There is good use of information and communication technology (ICT) resources in the teaching of vocational skills on the E2E programmes. NLGGTA effectively uses interactive CD-ROM and video systems to help learners understand automotive processes. In lessons, tutors combine this with explanations and other activities to create well-planned, interesting lessons. During the day there are six hours of classroom teaching with one tutor. Teaching strategies are used to maintain interest, but the length of time in the classroom reduces the learners' capacity for learning.

14. NLGGTA assesses companies thoroughly to ensure that it uses particularly good workplaces for the on-the-job training elements of the learners' programmes in

engineering. Many companies have excellent, modern facilities and learners benefit from using complex computer-based and other sophisticated test equipment. Some placements are in dealerships that specialise in high-value and high-performance cars. In some companies, learners receive additional formal training, which helps to develop their skills beyond the normal requirements of the modern apprenticeship. Employers have supportive managers and supervisors who are committed to training their learners and ensure that they are placed with experienced mentors. If a learner is unable to complete the range of skills required for their NVQ at their work placement, NLGGTA's training officer arranges for them to be placed with an alternative company which has expertise and work in the required area.

15. On the E2E programme there are good reviews of learners' progress, especially in the vocational aspect of the training. Once each week, the tutor reviews with the learners, their work and progress. They list and prioritise the work that needs to be done for the NVQ and attach a simple highlighted list to the front of the learners' portfolio, which they review and amend the following week. When appropriate, the tutor writes a new list and tapes it over the old one, so the full record is still available. This system is simple to operate and understand, and helps many of the learners to focus on the work they need to do.

16. E2E learners are well supported in the workplace. NLGGTA finds the appropriate work placements that provide practical experience relevant to the NVQ, normally within a few weeks of the start of their programme. The association discusses the particular background of each E2E learner with the potential workplace provider and takes care to allocate learners to work placements that are likely to meet their particular needs. NLGGTA's assessors visit the learners at their work placements every two to four weeks, and sometimes more frequently.

17. There is no appropriate specialist support for the development of learners' literacy and numeracy skills on the E2E programmes. Staff with no previous experience or training in this field provide support for the development of literacy and numeracy. While staff are conscientious and well motivated, they do not have the special knowledge and skills needed to provide support at a wide variety of levels to learners who have difficulties with literacy and numeracy. These learners are not receiving satisfactory support.

18. NLGGTA does not use initial assessment to develop the learners' individual programmes of learning. NLGGTA carries out an initial assessment of their literacy and numeracy skills and their aptitude for engineering. These are used to select E2E learners and modern apprentices. They are not used to help develop the production of an individual plan for each learner or to diagnose the levels of support that each of them needs. Learners on the E2E programmes do not receive the required minimum of two weeks' initial assessment, as specified in the E2E programme.

19. The internal verification procedures are inconsistent and insufficiently thorough. The process is poorly planned and insufficient monitoring of assessment takes place. Internal verification is generally carried out at the end of the programme and frequently only

checks compliance to awarding body quantity requirements. There are no planned sampling schemes and it is unclear if all units and assessors have been adequately monitored. Although there is some limited feedback to assessors, no comments are provided to improve the quality of assessment practice or the learners' work.

20. On the motor vehicle programmes there are poor learners' progress review practices. These progress reviews are planned and carried out regularly, but they are insufficiently thorough and do not identify or record clear short-term achievable targets that add pace or urgency to the learning process. Progress is not systematically reviewed at subsequent meetings. NLGGTA's quality assurance monitoring practices correctly identify this weakness, but it has not implemented corrective action.

21. There is poor use of the E2E passport document. The passport for each learner is not completed in accordance with the published guidelines. It is compulsory to use the passport for each E2E learner and they should be aware of its contents. Targets set at the monthly review process are often general and insufficiently specific and are not reviewed every month by the learners' key worker. Many sections of the passport relating to the personal and social needs of the learners are not completed. Learners do not have copies of the main sections of the passport.

22. The modern apprenticeship induction programme is ineffective for most learners. The programme covers a variety of topics, including health and safety, equal opportunities and the framework of their modern apprenticeship. This session lasts for up to one day, but is frequently shorter and most learners have limited recall of these sessions. In the early stages of their training, most learners have a poor understanding of their modern apprenticeship and the NVQ framework and what they are required to do. Issues relating to equal opportunities are not covered in sufficient depth during induction.

Leadership and management

23. NLGGTA has good links with local schools and other providers of E2E training to offer motor vehicle awareness training courses to school pupils. There have been some notable successes where pupils at risk of becoming disengaged in education have clearly benefited from the practical programmes and have remained in education. Some of them have continued with NLGGTA on E2E programmes or modern apprenticeships. In 2003-04, NLGGTA also offered the awareness course to other E2E training providers for their learners, as well as four schools. NLGGTA continues to work with the local education and business partnership (EBP) and is now offering a substantial two-year pre-modern apprenticeship programme for school pupils.

24. There is systematic and thorough monitoring of NLGGTA's key processes in its business and training activities. These procedures are updated regularly and incorporate new developments within the association. The quality assurance manager carries out systematic monitoring and auditing of the procedures in a planned annual sequence. These audits are effective in identifying non-compliance and appropriate corrective actions. However, this guidance is not often implemented effectively and there is little evidence of improvement in performance.

25. **NLGGTA manages its resources efficiently.** Learning accommodation is satisfactory and is still in the process of being organised after the association recently moved to new premises. There is an appropriate supply of learning materials and resources. Although the ICT facility is small, with limited space for learners, high-speed broadband connections enable them to access assessment on-line and this has improved achievement rates, especially in key skills.

26. Strategic planning is satisfactory. NLGGTA produces a detailed strategic plan, which sets out its objectives and targets to meet the needs of learners, local companies and other key stakeholders. There is some involvement of staff in the development of the plan. A marketing plan sets out the objectives to promote NLGGTA to companies and potential learners.

27. NLGGTA's approach to staff development is satisfactory. Staff development needs are reviewed and identified against job descriptions during the annual appraisal. There is systematic recording of individual learning plans. At induction, staff participate in an effective 12-day programme, including shadowing other staff members. Access to some training, such as equal opportunities and the certificate in education, is offered by external providers and this frequently necessitates some staff having to wait for courses.

28. Financial management of the programmes is now satisfactory. After a period of financial instability, rationalisation of the programmes and a move to more convenient premises has brought financial stability.

29. **Management of the learners' retention, progress and achievement is weak.** NLGGTA does not record or analyse learners' performance trends regularly and does not use this to monitor or measure improvements in quality. Progression and retention data is not reviewed or analysed and no information is available on the performance for differing groups of learners, either by ethnic background or the level of support needed. There is ineffective use of data to support business management decisions, and the organisation of data within the management information system hampers the identification of key issues relating to the learners' progression and achievement.

30. **The implementation of E2E programmes was ineffective.** Before their introduction, tutors were not made aware of the requirements of these programmes and did not receive appropriate training. In the early stages, NLGGTA terminated its relationship with a subcontractor and, a year after its initial introduction, NLGGTA's E2E programme still does not have a fully developed and integrated social and personal development strand.

31. **There is ineffective management of the collection of evidence for the learners' portfolios.** Learners are unaware of the nature and type of evidence required for their NVQ and are frequently encouraged to delay collection of evidence until later in the year, which delays progress. In their progress reviews, learners are continually set targets to collect job cards, and many do this to excess, with no clear idea of why or what is required. An external verifier's report states that better collection of evidence should be achieved, but this has not been actioned.

32. There is an inadequate focus on equality of opportunity and diversity in NLGGTA.

There is an adequate range of policies, but these are written in a style that is difficult for the learners to understand. The guidance and templates given to employers are inappropriate for the workplace. Staff and learners receive basic equal opportunities and diversity training. Learners' ongoing awareness of equal opportunities is poor. There is insufficient training for learners and staff to update and reinforce their levels of understanding. Learners' progress reviews give inadequate attention to equal opportunities and diversity. When they are discussed it is through closed questions. The use of learners' data is inadequate. NLGGTA gathers information on learners' ethnicity, religious background, age, gender, disabilities and any additional learning needs. There is no evaluation of retention and progression rates by ethnicity, religious background, gender or disability. However, achievement rates are reviewed by ethnicity and gender. The monitoring of equal opportunities in the workplace is inadequate. NLGGTA has a pre-work placement form which asks if companies have an equal opportunities policy, but this has not been completed for many work placements. The annual workplace monitoring records do not include any checks of equal opportunity in the workplace.

33. There is insufficient impact of quality assurance practices in improving performance in the training programmes.

Although all key processes have clear procedures, and there is a methodical approach to monitoring these procedures, there has been no demonstrable improvement in key performance indicators. The self-assessment and action-planning process is ineffective. The process is inclusive of the views of learners, employers and staff, including the managerial board of governors. The report overstates some strengths, which inspectors regarded as norms, and failed to identify some of the weaknesses. Many of the weaknesses identified in previous inspections still remain and there is little overall improvement in performance. The action plan is not reviewed regularly, performance targets are imprecise and target dates are often adjusted to accommodate under-achievement.

Leadership and management

Strengths

- good links with schools and E2E providers to offer training in motor vehicle engineering
- systematic and thorough monitoring of key processes

Weaknesses

- weak management of learners' retention, progress and achievement
- ineffective management of evidence collection
- ineffective implementation of E2E programme
- inadequate focus on equal opportunities
- insufficient impact of quality assurance practices in improving performance

Engineering, technology & manufacturing

Motor vehicle/cycle

Strengths

- particularly good workplaces
- good attainment of practical skills

Weaknesses

- poor retention and achievement rates
- poor practices for learners' progress reviews
- insufficiently thorough internal verification
- ineffective induction onto the modern apprenticeship

Foundation programmes

Employability/employment training

Strengths

- good attainment of vocational skills and knowledge
- good use of ICT materials in the teaching of vocational skills
- good reviews of learners' progress within the vocational training
- good support for learners at the work placements

Weaknesses

- poor use of the E2E passport
- inadequate use of initial assessment to develop individual learners' programmes
- no recognition of learners' non-accredited achievements
- no appropriate specialist support for learners' literacy and numeracy skills

WHAT LEARNERS LIKE ABOUT NORTH LONDON GARAGE GROUP TRAINING ASSOCIATION:

- working, learning about cars and gaining qualifications
- 'the people I work with'
- the training centre
- the E2E tutor

WHAT LEARNERS THINK NORTH LONDON GARAGE GROUP TRAINING ASSOCIATION COULD IMPROVE:

- 'better information on what I need to do'
- out-of-date technology
- the amount of NVQ paperwork
- 'fewer boring and tedious tasks'
- the help for those who need support and slow down the class
- ease of access to the training centre
- respect in the workplace
- the number of practical demonstrations
- the provision of food on site

KEY CHALLENGES FOR NORTH LONDON GARAGE GROUP TRAINING ASSOCIATION:

- improve learners' retention and achievement rates
- ensure that the learners' progress reviews set meaningful and challenging targets
- ensure that the workplace learning links effectively to the learners' achievement of the modern apprenticeship framework
- continually raise the awareness and understanding of equality of opportunity
- improve the provision for learners' literacy and numeracy needs
- focus the quality assurance practices on improving performance
- meet all the requirements of the E2E programme
- make internal verification more thorough and effective
- make the induction programme more meaningful and memorable
- ensure that the initial assessment process correctly identifies the learners' individual needs

DETAILED INSPECTION FINDINGS

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Grade 4

Strengths

- good links with schools and E2E providers to offer training in motor vehicle engineering
- systematic and thorough monitoring of key processes

Weaknesses

- weak management of learners' retention, progress and achievement
- ineffective management of evidence collection
- ineffective implementation of E2E programme
- inadequate focus on equal opportunities
- insufficient impact of quality assurance practices in improving performance

34. NLGGTA has good links with local schools through the local EBP to offer motor vehicle awareness training courses to school pupils. In 2002-03, 53 secondary school pupils from eight local schools attended an awareness course. Many of these pupils were at risk of becoming disengaged from education; they clearly benefited from a more practical programme and remained in education. Eight pupils have now left school and joined NLGGTA either as a foundation modern apprentice or on the E2E programme. In 2003-04, NLGGTA also offered the awareness course to other E2E training providers for their learners, as well as four schools. NLGGTA continues to work with the local EBP and is now offering a substantial two-year pre-modern apprenticeship programme for school pupils. Two courses of 10 pupils from five local schools are due to start in September 2004.

35. Strategic planning is satisfactory. NLGGTA produces a detailed strategic plan, which sets out objectives and targets to meet the needs of learners, local companies and other key stakeholders. There is some involvement of staff in the development of the plan. A marketing plan sets out the objectives to promote NLGGTA to companies and potential learners.

36. There is satisfactory management of staff performance. NLGGTA has a skills inventory to shape staff development needs. It identifies and reviews staff induction and development needs annually against job descriptions and involves staff in this process. The recording of individual training plans is systematic. At induction, staff participate in an effective 12-day programme, which includes shadowing other staff members. Some staff have to wait for key training courses due to restricted access to some development training, such as equal opportunities and the certificate in education that external providers offer.

37. The management of the learners' training and performance is weak. NLGGTA does not monitor or review learners' performance regularly and only reviews and presents achievement data at its annual general meeting. However, the chief executive and chairman do meet regularly and discuss the number of learners who complete their qualifications each month. NLGGTA does not record or analyse the learners' performance trends regularly or use the information to monitor or measure improvements in quality. It does not support its learning management decisions with the effective use of data. Learners' progression and retention data is not reviewed or analysed and no information is available on the performance for differing groups of learners either by ethnic background or level of support need. There is ineffective use of data to support business management decisions and the organisation of data within the management information system hampers the identification of key learner progression and achievement issues.

38. NLGGTA does not systematically encourage learners to collect assessment evidence promptly and its management of this is ineffective. Some learners already in a work placement have been directed not to collect evidence until the start of their off-the-job training in September, which can delay their progress by up to six months. Learners are unaware of the nature and type of evidence required for their NVQ and many of their portfolios contain evidence that is not cross-referenced against assessment criteria. In their progress reviews, learners are continually set targets to collect job cards and many do this with no clear idea of why it is required. One learner interviewed had been collecting job cards for 18 months, but the assessor had never checked these and the target for the next review was to collect more job cards. An external verifier's report states that better collection of evidence should be achieved, but this has not been actioned.

39. The implementation of E2E programmes was ineffective. Before their introduction, tutors were not made aware of the requirements of these programmes and did not receive appropriate training. In the early stages, NLGGTA terminated its relationship with a subcontractor due to concerns about the quality of the training provision and, a year after its initial introduction, the association's E2E programme still does not have a fully developed and integrated social and personal development strand.

40. There is no evidence of a strategy to support learners with specific learning needs. NLGGTA uses an initial assessment test during induction, but there is no evidence of using diagnostic assessments to identify individual learners' development needs. It uses the results of this test purely as a selection test and learners that it considers unable to benefit from the association's training are redirected to other providers or Connexions. Specialist formal support for learners on modern apprenticeships with literacy, numeracy and language needs is inadequate. The staff on the E2E programme do not have the specialist skills and experience to meet the learners' needs. Although staff development needs have been identified, this has yet to take place.

Equality of opportunity

Contributory grade 4

41. NLGGTA is establishing contacts with schools, attending career events and working with community groups. It is challenging the traditional use of inappropriate images in the garage trade, and has recently sent a letter to all employers, and visited many, highlighting this as poor practice and a barrier to the recruitment of learners from many groups.

42. While the equal opportunities policy satisfactorily describes recruitment, training and learners' progress, and also applies to NLGGTA's staff, the association's focus on equal opportunities is inadequate. The policy refers to the Disability Discrimination Act 1995, but not to other relevant legislation, such as the Human Rights Act 1998 or the Race Relations Discrimination Act 1976 and the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000. The policy for bullying and harassment is satisfactory, but policies are written in a style that is difficult for the learners to understand. The equal opportunities policy and complaints procedure are not on display or easily accessible to learners or staff. NLGGTA provides employers with a manual that contains guidance on the equal opportunities policy and the management of learners, but it includes an equal opportunities policy template that is inappropriate for use in the workplace. The association uses a detailed complaints procedure to record equal opportunities issues, but there is no analysis and insufficient evidence of management actions to prevent recurrence of some issues. Learners report that staff are approachable and that they deal with complaints sensitively.

43. NLGGTA has recently moved to new premises and is still in the process of adapting the buildings. The workshops and classrooms are all on the ground floor and have good accessibility, but staff accommodation and offices are all on the first floor, and there is no lift or toilet facilities for people with disabilities.

44. Staff and learners receive basic equal opportunities and diversity training at induction, but the learners' ongoing awareness of equal opportunities is poor. There is insufficient training for learners and staff to update and reinforce their understanding. Staff last received formal training in October 2002, but they receive updates on legislation in hard copy at team meetings. NLGGTA identifies staff training in equal opportunities as a weakness in its development plan, and new members of staff attend training sessions at the local LSC. The association gathers data relating to equality and diversity during the interview and appointment process for staff, but it has not used or analysed it for management purposes. Learners' progress reviews pay inadequate attention to equal opportunities and diversity. When they are discussed, it is through a single closed question.

45. The management of learners' data is inadequate. NLGGTA gathers information on learners' ethnicity, religious background, age, gender, disabilities and any additional learning needs at application and at interview. It monitors applications and learners' start data each month to meet contractual requirements. There is no evaluation of learners' retention and progression rates by ethnicity, religious background, gender or disability. However, it reviews learners' achievement rates by ethnicity and gender. The recruitment and retention of female learners remains an ongoing issue at 1 per cent, compared with the national figure of 3.9 per cent and NLGGTA has set targets in the

development plan to raise these levels.

46. The monitoring of equal opportunities in the workplace is inadequate. NLGGTA has a pre-placement form which asks if companies have an equal opportunities policy, but this has not been completed for many work placements. The annual workplace monitoring records do not include any checks of equal opportunities in the workplace. The training partnership agreement between NLGGTA and the employers contains a statement about equal opportunities; however, there are no copies of this statement in any of the employers' files.

Quality assurance

Contributory grade 4

47. Quality assurance is the responsibility of the chief executive. NLGGTA has a quality assurance process that meets the requirements of ISO 9001:2000, which is an international quality assurance standard, and a range of appropriate procedures that cover all aspects of the training programmes. It updates these procedures regularly and incorporates them in new developments within the company. The quality assurance manager carries out systematic monitoring and auditing of the procedures in a planned sequence and an annual audit cycle of audit covers each of the procedures at least once. These audits are effective in identifying non-compliance and appropriate corrective actions. For example, learners' progress reviews have correctly been identified as insufficiently thorough and ineffective in promoting pace and challenge to their progress, and appropriate guidance has been provided to the work-based assessors. However, NLGGTA has not implemented this guidance effectively and there is little evidence of improvement to the review process.

48. The procedures to observe teaching sessions within the training centre and at the subcontracted provision at further education colleges are satisfactory. Reports and feedback are provided and effective action is taken. For example, as a result of the observation profile and feedback from learners and employers, one further education college has been removed from the list of preferred providers.

49. There is insufficient impact of quality assurance practices in improving performance within the training programmes. Although all key processes have clear procedures and there is a methodical approach to monitoring these procedures, there has been no demonstrable improvement in key performance indicators. For example, many learners make slow progress towards the completion of their modern apprenticeship framework, and retention and achievement are poor. These issues are identified within the self-assessment report and by quality assurance monitoring. However, staff do not make effective use of the data to improve the learners' progress and performance, and staff often do not meet their targets for framework completions.

50. The arrangements for internal verification are weak and insufficiently thorough. There is insufficient monitoring of assessment and little systematic planning to sample assessors or learners. Internal verification is often carried out at the end of the training programme and has little impact in improving assessment practices or learners' performance. The use of documents and monitoring systems is inconsistent. Many of

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the learners' portfolios of evidence sampled contained no internal verification records, even though some learners had been in training for over two years. Many of the learners interviewed had little concept of their progress, the quality of their work or what was required to complete their programmes.

51. The self-assessment and action-planning process is ineffective. The process is inclusive of the views of learners and employers, which NLGGTA collects by a variety of satisfaction surveys. The self-assessment report overstates some strengths, which inspectors regarded as norms, and failed to identify some of the weaknesses. Many of the weaknesses identified in previous inspections still remain and there is little overall improvement in performance. The action plan is not reviewed regularly, performance targets are imprecise and target dates are often adjusted to accommodate under-achievement.

AREAS OF LEARNING

Engineering, technology & manufacturing

Engineering, technology & manufacturing		4
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
<i>Motor vehicle/cycle</i> - Work-based learning for young people	173	4

Motor vehicle/cycle

Strengths

- particularly good workplaces
- good attainment of practical skills

Weaknesses

- poor retention and achievement rates
- poor practices for learners' progress reviews
- insufficiently thorough internal verification
- ineffective induction onto the modern apprenticeship

Achievement and standards

52. Learners work under the tuition and guidance of highly experienced motor vehicle technicians in good-quality workplaces. They quickly gain competence and confidence by working on customers' vehicles under commercial conditions and are given increasing responsibility to work on their own wherever possible. Typically, learners develop good practical and diagnostic skills. They also attain good knowledge of the maintenance of safety and commercially critical aspects of public carriage vehicles, and high-performance passenger vehicles and cars in main dealerships.

53. Since 1999, 287 learners have started the advanced modern apprenticeship. Of these, only 22 have completed the full framework. There are still 118 learners in training but the maximum possible achievement is low at 50 per cent. In the same period, 115 learners started the foundation modern apprenticeship, with 48 still training. Only 11 learners have achieved the full modern apprenticeship framework. The maximum potential achievement rate is less than 10 per cent in two of the five years in that period. Although programmes leading to an NVQ at level 1 are no longer delivered discretely, but as part of an E2E framework, the historical performance is similarly poor.

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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		1999-2000							
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number of starts	53		50		66		48		85							
Retained*	0		1	2	6	9	23	48	27	32						
Successfully completed	0		1	2	0	0	11	23	10	12						
Still in learning	47		26	52	26	39	15	31	5	6						

*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																
Foundation modern apprenticeships (FMA)																
	2003-04		2002-03		2001-02		2000-01		1999-2000							
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number of starts	38		31		22		26		38							
Retained*	0		11	35	10	45	14	54	8	21						
Successfully completed	0		1	3	0	0	8	31	2	5						
Still in learning	30		15	48	2	9	0	0	1	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																
NVQ Training																
	2003-04		2002-03		2001-02		2000-01		1999-2000							
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number of starts	4		48		63		32		50							
Retained*	0		17	35	13	21	11	34	17	34						
Successfully completed	0		11	23	7	11	9	28	12	24						
Still in learning	4		2	4	0	0	0	0	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

54. The quality of workplaces is good and covers a wide range of motor vehicle companies. NLGGTA assesses companies thoroughly and many of them fail to meet the requirements and are not used. Many companies have excellent, modern facilities and learners benefit from using complex computer-based and other sophisticated test equipment. Some work placements are in dealerships, which specialise in high-value and high-performance cars. In some companies, learners receive additional formal training, which helps to develop their skills beyond the normal requirements of the modern

apprenticeship. Most learners develop a high degree of self-confidence, which assists them in their work and training, and many of them express great satisfaction with their training. Employers have supportive managers and supervisors who are committed to training their learners and ensure they are placed with experienced mentors. Some employers invite members of NLGGTA's technical staff to join professional development sessions. If learners are unable to complete the range of skills required for their NVQ at their work placement, NLGGTA's training officer arranges alternative work placements for them at other companies that have expertise and work in the required area.

55. In the workplace, learners are engaged in a wide variety of responsible jobs and early in their training are given greater responsibility for increasingly complex jobs on customer vehicles. This provides a variety of opportunities for assessment by observation, although sometimes trade conditions limit forward planning. Assessors operate in a very flexible way and encourage the learners to identify assessment opportunities and to telephone them so that they can visit at short notice. Employers are willing to provide different learning experiences, although not all are sufficiently aware or effectively involved in learners' reviews to meet the assessment requirements of the modern apprenticeship framework. Employers express great satisfaction with NLGGTA and some of them have been involved with the association for over 20 years. There is very frequent contact at the workplace, sometimes weekly or every two weeks. In addition, there is weekly contact for learners attending the training centre or subcontracted colleges.

56. Resources at NLGGTA's training centre are basic but satisfactory. The practical area is compact but contains a range of fixed equipment and a suitable range of hand tools for the learners' use. The practical provision is under-used for demonstrations and practical activities relating theory to practice. A suitably equipped computer room is available, but the facility is small and limited in the space available for learners. Much of the available classroom accommodation is drab and uninspiring, with poorly maintained rooms cluttered with inadequate storage.

57. Learners' progress reviews are planned and carried out regularly, but they are insufficiently thorough and do not identify or record clear short-term achievable targets that add pace to the learning process. Similarly, they do not challenge learners and, even when learners have met targets such as NVQ completion, NLGGTA does not convey a sense of urgency for the learners to collect portfolio evidence and to target progress towards completion of their award. Progress is not systematically reviewed at subsequent meetings. NLGGTA's quality assurance monitoring practices correctly identify this weakness, but it has not implemented corrective action.

58. The internal verification procedures are inconsistent and insufficiently thorough. The process is poorly planned and insufficient monitoring of assessment takes place. Internal verification is generally carried out at the end of the programme and frequently only checks compliance to awarding body quantity requirements. There are no planned sampling schemes and it is unclear if all units and assessors have been adequately monitored. Although there is some limited feedback to assessors, no comments are provided to improve the quality of assessment practice or learners' work. Many learners' portfolios contain no record of internal verification or any indication that the work meets

appropriate standards, or what, if anything, the learner needs to do to improve their work, even though many of them have been in training for over two years.

59. The induction programme is ineffective for most learners. On joining the training programme, learners receive an induction in the workplace and also at the training centre, which they attend for sessions on a variety of topics, including health and safety, equal opportunities and their modern apprenticeship framework. Although some learners' files contain documentary evidence to confirm attendance at these sessions, most learners have limited recall of them. As a result, in the early stages of their training, most learners have a poor understanding of their modern apprenticeship and the NVQ framework and what they are required to do. Consequently, they do not take advantage of the many opportunities provided by their work placements to gather evidence for their portfolio. Issues relating to equal opportunities are not covered in sufficient depth during induction. All learners complete a questionnaire on the induction process but the results are not systematically analysed and used to improve the programme.

60. Before starting their training programme, learners who have applied directly to NLGGTA take an initial assessment test. The results of this test, together with a personal interview, are used as selection criteria to determine whether a learner joins an E2E programme or a foundation or advanced modern apprenticeship. There are no diagnostic tests to identify additional support needs, such as dyslexia, and there are no formal support arrangements to which learners can refer.

Leadership and management

61. The management of training in motor vehicle engineering is unsatisfactory. NLGGTA does not make the best of appropriate procedures and recording systems. Most records, documents and literature to support learning is poorly produced. Channels of communication do not effectively ensure that targets are set, recorded, monitored or met. There is an apparent lack of urgency throughout the organisation to deal with issues identified in the previous inspection or in subsequent self-assessment reports. Where weaknesses are identified, action planned dates and time schedules are not implemented or monitored effectively. There is an annual staff appraisal system. Training and development needs are identified and staff carry out assessor, verifier and initial teacher training programmes. Quality assurance systems are poor and are insufficiently thorough to rectify weaknesses such as poor retention and achievement.

62. NLGGTA's most recent self-assessment report is a comprehensive document but does not identify and rectify weaknesses effectively. It does not implement appropriate action plans and monitoring systems. There is little evidence to suggest that NLGGTA takes positive action to promote equal opportunities. Most learners demonstrate little understanding of equality of opportunity and related issues. Little reference is made to reinforce understanding during learners' reviews. However, literature and learning materials do not contain discriminatory content.

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

- good attainment of vocational skills and knowledge
- good use of ICT materials in the teaching of vocational skills
- good reviews of learners' progress within the vocational training
- good support for learners at the work placements

Weaknesses

- poor use of the E2E passport
- inadequate use of initial assessment to develop individual learners' programmes
- no recognition of learners' non-accredited achievements
- no appropriate specialist support for learners' literacy and numeracy skills

Achievement and standards

63. The E2E programme has only been running for one full year and trends in achievement are not available. Achievements for E2E learners are measured against the individual aims identified at the start of the programme. All E2E learners at NLGGTA have the same aims recorded in their passport: the achievement of an NVQ at level 1 in motor vehicle fast fitting and an improvement in their initial levels of literacy and numeracy. Although over half of the learners started on the E2E programme more than six months ago, only one has achieved the target qualification. This is not satisfactory but is more related to inappropriate qualification aims being set for some learners than to poor achievement. Most learners have achieved individual units of an NVQ although they have not sought unit accreditation. The progress of most learners is steady but slow. However, when compared with their past educational record this often represents an improvement and is satisfactory. Attendance averages 69 per cent and is also satisfactory.

64. Basic literacy has improved for 41 per cent of current learners and basic numeracy has improved for 25 per cent of learners. These figures are unsatisfactory. NLGGTA has terminated an arrangement to subcontract literacy and numeracy support and it is now providing this in-house.

65. NLGGTA does not include in learners' individual aims, other types of achievement that are recognised in the E2E guidance, such as improvements in commitment, and gaining control of personal finance. NLGGTA does not measure outcomes for these achievements.

Quality of education and training

66. Many of the E2E learners have had significant difficulties in learning. Nevertheless, learners do work to a high standard for this level of course. In theory and practical classes, learners gain an understanding of the principles underlying the NVQ competences they are required to demonstrate, and they often move beyond the standards of the NVQ at level 1. The enthusiasm and knowledge of the tutors on the motor vehicle courses works with the interest of the learners and overcomes some of their barriers to learning. When asked to list the strengths of their programme, E2E learners identified a member of the teaching staff at the top of their list.

67. NLGGTA effectively use ICT resources such as interactive CD-ROM and video systems to help learners to understand automotive processes. In lessons, this is combined with explanations by the tutor and other activities to create well-planned, interesting lessons. The background knowledge lessons to support the NVQ take place on one day each week, during which there are six hours of classroom teaching with one tutor. Teaching strategies are used to maintain interest, but the length of time in the classroom reduces the learners' capacity for learning.

68. There are good reviews of learners' progress. The E2E motor vehicle tutor reviews the learners' work and progress with them once each week, and prioritises the work which needs to be done for the NVQ. The list is taped to the outside front cover of the learners' portfolios, where it will be readily seen throughout the coming week. The tutor reviews and amends the list the following week. When appropriate, the tutor writes a new list and tapes it over the old one so the full record is still available. This system is simple to operate and understand, and helps many learners to focus on the work they need to do.

69. NLGGTA finds the learners appropriate work placements that provide practical experience relevant to the NVQ, normally within a few weeks of the start of their programme. The association discusses the particular background of each E2E learner with the potential workplace provider and takes care to allocate learners to work placements that are likely to provide them with appropriate experience and support. NLGGTA's assessors visit the learners at their work placement every two to four weeks, and sometimes more frequently. The E2E tutor liaises regularly with the assessors to discuss the learners' progress and effectively co-ordinates the training, assessment and support.

70. The vocational staff for E2E are satisfactory. There are three tutors, who are all experienced in motor vehicle work. One member of staff is a well-qualified teacher. Two of them do not have teaching or training qualifications but one of these is an experienced

teacher. The rooms and workshops are adequate but one classroom has no ventilation and is not satisfactory, but this has been recognised and actions to correct the problem have been instigated.

71. Use of the E2E passport is poor. The passport for each learner is not completed in accordance with the published guidelines, even though it is compulsory to use the E2E passport for each E2E learner. Targets set at the monthly review process are often general and insufficiently specific and are not reviewed every month by the learners' key worker. Many sections of the passport relating to the learners' personal and social needs are not completed. Learners do not have copies of the main sections of the passport as required in the guidelines.

72. NLGGTA does not use initial assessment to develop individual learners' programmes. The association carries out an initial assessment of their literacy and numeracy skills and their aptitude for engineering. These are used to select E2E learners and modern apprentices. They are not used to help develop the production of an individual plan for each E2E learner. NLGGTA does not provide the required minimum of two weeks' initial assessment leading to the development of an individual plan for each learner. All E2E learners at NLGGTA have the same qualification aim, although this is not always appropriate. All learners are set aims to improve their initial level of literacy and numeracy. The individual needs for the personal and social development of each learner, a required strand of all E2E plans, is not dealt with in the initial assessment, in the aims in the learners' passport, or in the learners' programme.

73. While staff are very willing to celebrate any of the learners' personal successes, NLGGTA does not recognise their non-accredited achievements. Learners who attend punctually throughout the week receive a bonus payment, but achievements such as getting out of debt or controlling inappropriate behaviour, which E2E learners can record as achievements, are not recorded.

74. There is no appropriate specialist support for the development of learners' literacy and numeracy skills. While staff are conscientious and well motivated they do not have previous experience, training or the specialist knowledge and skills needed to provide support at a wide variety of levels to learners who have difficulties with literacy and numeracy. These learners are not receiving satisfactory support.

Leadership and management

75. The management of the introduction and ongoing development of E2E programmes is ineffective. Staff involved in the programme are not focused on the objectives of the E2E programme and are not aware of the ethos which sponsors of this programme seek to develop. E2E's staff report directly to NLGGTA's management. They are part of the engineering team and there are no separate arrangements for communications in this area of learning. There are informal links between the staff who support E2E learners individually. Staff are working effectively within the parameters set by NLGGTA's management.