

INSPECTION REPORT

Prostart

28 May 2004



ADULT LEARNING
INSPECTORATE

PROSTART

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

Prostart

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INSPECTION REPORT

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROVIDER

1. Prostart was established in July 1999 as a trading arm of Millbrook Management Services Limited. Prostart is based in Long Eaton, where it has its administrative offices and training facilities. The company has two directors and 13 full-time and three part-time staff. It also has two contract staff. The company has expanded recently and has reorganised to accommodate the increased number of staff and learners. The company is managed by a managing director who is supported by the finance director. Four co-ordinators report to the managing director and are responsible for managing the administrators, trainers and assessors.

2. Prostart has contracts with Nottingham Learning and Skills Council (LSC) and Derbyshire LSC to provide training for advanced and foundation modern apprentices, national vocational qualifications (NVQs) and Entry to Employment (E2E). Through Derbyshire Business Link, Prostart has recently started to provide training to employees of local companies through the Employer Training Pilot (ETP) scheme, known locally as 'valuable skills'. Prostart also delivers training to learners aged 25 or over as a subcontractor for a local college of further education. Training is provided in business administration, information and communications technology (ICT), accounting, retailing, customer service and sales, early years care and education and foundation programmes. Provision in early years care and education was not inspected as there were too few learners.

SCOPE OF PROVISION

Business administration, management & professional

3. Prostart provides work-based learning programmes in administration, accounting and management for 144 learners. There are 23 administration, 22 accounting and two management advanced modern apprentices; 59 administration and 17 accounting foundation modern apprentices; and five administration, 11 accounting and five payroll administration learners on NVQ training programmes. Accounting learners attend off-the-job training either at Prostart or at a local subcontracted college. Administration learners are visited in the workplace each month for training and assessment and some attend training sessions at Prostart. Learners have a progress review every 12 weeks. Eighty-eight per cent of learners are employed. Learners who do not have a work placement attend the training centre full time. Learners are recruited through referrals from Connexions or by direct application from learners or by employers and can start at any time of the year. The recruitment process includes an initial assessment of key skills and literacy and numeracy and an interview. Most learners receive an induction either at the provider's premises or in the workplace. The organisation employs 10 administration assessors and one part-time accounting assessor.

Information & communications technology

4. There are 10 foundation modern apprentices and one advanced modern apprentice on work-based learning programmes in using information technology (IT). Learners are recruited mostly through Connexions or referral by local employers. Applicants are interviewed by Prostart, and if unemployed are helped to find appropriate employment. At the time of the inspection all learners are employed. Induction is carried out either at the Prostart centre or in the workplace. All learners are given an assessment for literacy and numeracy needs. There is a team of four assessors who visit learners in the workplace, at least every month, to carry out training and assessment of NVQ and key skills and provide support for literacy or numeracy needs. A separate member of staff visits learners at least every 12 weeks to carry out progress reviews.

Retailing, customer service & transportation

5. There are 67 learners on retailing, customer service, call handling, sales and warehousing programmes. There are nine modern apprentices in retailing at advanced or foundation level and one learner following an NVQ-only programme. There are 36 modern apprentices in customer services at advanced or foundation level and seven following NVQ-only programmes. A further nine learners are modern apprentices in call handling and five learners following sales or distribution NVQs. Some learners are placed with employers after an initial induction at Prostart. Most of the learners are recruited direct from employers.

6. Training is mostly delivered on the job by employers or by visiting assessors from Prostart. Assessors visit learners at least once a month and learning is reviewed every 10 to 12 weeks. There are seven members of staff covering the programmes as assessors or internal verifiers. The learners on the call handling programme are assessed and verified by a subcontractor.

Foundation programmes

7. In August 2003, Prostart's E2E programme replaced a previous preparation programme. Since then, there have been 41 starts. Most learners are referred by Connexions and have left school with few or no qualifications, or have only held jobs for short periods of time since leaving education. Currently there are 17 learners, most of whom have declared additional social needs or learning difficulties. All learners may choose from a variety of modules including interview techniques, how to produce a relevant curriculum vitae, drug and alcohol misuse avoidance, and health and safety. There is an ongoing programme of guest speakers from external agencies. There are opportunities to participate in work tasters before work placements. Links are established with local colleges and other training providers to offer additional pathways for learners to progress. At the time of the inspection three learners are in employment and are preparing for an NVQ at level 1. All of the other learners are unemployed. Induction is carried out at the Prostart centre for all learners. They are assessed for literacy and numeracy needs as part of their initial assessment as well as a diagnostic test to identify specific learning needs. There are two full-time tutors, and each learner is assigned an assessor, who is not one of the E2E tutors.

ABOUT THE INSPECTION

Number of inspectors	6
Number of inspection days	22
Number of learner interviews	54
Number of staff interviews	39
Number of employer interviews	14
Number of subcontractor interviews	1
Number of locations/sites/learning centres visited	35
Number of partner/external agency interviews	2

OVERALL JUDGEMENT

8. The quality of the provision is inadequate to meet the reasonable needs of those receiving it. More specifically, Prostart's leadership and management are unsatisfactory, as is its approach to equality of opportunity and quality assurance. The quality of work-based learning in business administration and accounting, ICT and E2E is satisfactory. The quality of work-based learning in customer service, retailing and call handling is 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

Business administration, management & professional		3
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
<i>Business administration</i>		
- Work-based learning for young people	89	3
<i>Accounting and economics</i>		
- Work-based learning for young people	55	3

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Information & communications technology		3
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
<i>Using IT</i> - Work-based learning for young people	11	3
Retailing, customer service & transportation		4
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
<i>Retailing</i> - Work-based learning for young people	10	4
<i>Customer service</i> - Work-based learning for young people	43	4
<i>Call centre operations</i> - Work-based learning for young people	14	4
Foundation programmes		3
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
<i>Employability/employment training</i> - Work-based learning for young people	17	3

KEY FINDINGS

Achievement and standards

9. **Learners on administration and accounting programmes develop good skills** that they are able to use effectively in the workplace. Most employers give learners good opportunities to progress in their job roles and many progress to higher-level qualifications.

10. **Completion of apprenticeship frameworks on administration and accounting programmes is slow.** Technical certificates have only recently been introduced, and there is insufficient training for key skills.

11. **Learners on customer service, retailing and call handling programmes are enthusiastic and motivated** and have a positive attitude towards their learning and employment. Feedback given from Prostart assessors makes the learners feel valued and supported.

12. On customer service, retailing and call handling programmes, 64 per cent of the 107 learners who have completed their training since 2000 continued beyond their expected completion date. Some learners do not pass their key skills test at the first attempt.

Retention for NVQ learners is poor as 50 per cent leave before the end of the programme.

13. **The retention rates are good on ICT modern apprenticeship programmes.**

14. **Learners on ICT programmes show good development of practical skills.** They are competent in the use of a wide range of computer software.

15. **Retention rates are good on E2E programmes,** at 42 per cent.

Quality of education and training

16. Five learning sessions were observed, all of which were satisfactory or better.

17. **Learners are trained well in jobsearch techniques on administration and accounting programmes.** Learners receive good pre-employment training and their confidence in applying for jobs is significantly increased.

18. **Pastoral support on administration and accounting programmes is good.** Staff are caring and are very responsive to learners' needs. Learners receive good practical support and have confidential discussions about a wide range of personal and social problems.

19. **The planning and co-ordination of training on administration and accounting programmes is insufficient.** Initial assessment is inconsistent and is not adequately used to plan individual learning programmes. Individual learning plans are not detailed and do not adequately identify long-term targets or interim milestones. Employers are not sufficiently involved in the development of individual learning plans or in progress reviews. There is little planning of links between workplace and NVQ or key skills activities. Targets do not always have clear timescales and they are not always specific to learning outcomes.

20. **Learners on customer service, retailing and call handling programmes develop skills which allow them to gain employment.** Off-the-job support is offered to help learners into jobs. On-the-job training allows learners to progress and gain promotion at work.

21. **There is a good range of qualifications available to learners on customer service, retailing and call handling programmes.** Learners can take additional qualifications related to their workplace.

22. **There is insufficient planning and co-ordination of training on customer service, retailing and call handling programmes.** Initial assessment and training is inconsistent. Employers do not fully understand the modern apprenticeship frameworks. There has been inadequate planning of the new technical certificates in retailing and customer service.

PROSTART

23. **Prostart has developed good working relationships with organisations.** The recruitment officers are successful in matching ICT learners to appropriate job vacancies.

24. **Key skills are an integral part of the vocational programme and the collection of evidence starts early in the learners' programme.** Learners on ICT programmes receive frequent visits from assessors for training and assessment. However, the targets shown on the assessment plans are insufficiently detailed.

25. **Individual learning plans are not used to identify individual training needs on ICT programmes.** Some learners are not sure of their target achievement dates for completing NVQ units. Employers do not have a copy of learners' individual learning plans.

26. **There is insufficient structured involvement of employers in training and assessment on ICT programmes.** Some work-based supervisors and employers have a poor understanding of the training programme and they are unable to help the learner in the workplace. While Prostart works with the learner and their employer to identify individual training needs, these are not recorded on the individual learning plan.

27. **The learning sessions on the E2E programme are innovative and well planned.** Learners work in small groups and receive a significant amount of individual training.

28. **Learners receive good support on the E2E programme,** mainly from their trainers but also from the administrative support staff. Learners also benefit from well-matched job placements and supportive employers.

29. **Progress reviews on the E2E programme are not used for the individual learning plans.** Learners have little idea of where they are on the programme and are only clear about their immediate objectives with little idea of broader aims. Learners do progress, but their progression is not planned.

Leadership and management

30. **Prostart has an open and transparent management style, which ensures staff are well supported by managers.** Communication between management and staff is also good, and staff are well informed about developments in the organisation.

31. **The staff development at Prostart is good.** Staff attend a good range of training activities, many leading to professional qualifications.

32. **Prostart takes effective measures to ensure that there are suitable work placements for learners.** A lot of effort goes into placing learners into appropriate work placements and, once there, learners have a good level of pastoral support.

33. **There is inadequate strategic planning for the organisation and for the training programmes.** There are action plans, but these are not coherent. The various plans

often do not relate to each other.

34. **Prostart does not have a working strategy for the development of learners' literacy, numeracy and language skills.** A strategy is being drawn up, but it has yet to be agreed and implemented.

35. **Staff have insufficient appropriate training in equality and diversity.** Staff who have specific responsibility for equal opportunities do not have an up-to-date knowledge of relevant legislation. Staff have not been trained in how to handle learners from particular groups or those with additional needs.

36. **Quality assurance arrangements are inadequate.** The monitoring of subcontractors for the accounting programmes is inadequate. The training observation system is not used effectively to make improvements and there is insufficient sharing of good practice. New quality assurance procedures have been devised, but these have yet to be implemented. Quality assurance is a weakness in three of the four areas of learning inspected.

37. **The management of internal verification is weak.** There is insufficient sharing of good practice or standardisation of assessment practice. The outcomes of internal verification are not systematically used in staff performance management.

Leadership and management

Strengths

- open and transparent management style
- good internal communications and team working
- good range of professional development for staff
- particularly effective measures to ensure suitable work placements for learners

Weaknesses

- inadequate strategic planning
- no strategy for literacy and numeracy
- inadequate arrangements for quality assurance
- weak internal verification
- insufficient appropriate staff training in equality and diversity

PROSTART

Business administration, management & professional

Business administration

Strengths

- good development of business and administration skills
- good support to secure employment
- good pastoral support

Weaknesses

- slow progress towards framework completion
- insufficient planning and co-ordination of training
- inadequate arrangements for quality assurance

Accounting and economics

Strengths

- good development of accounting skills
- good support to secure employment
- good pastoral support

Weaknesses

- slow progress towards framework completion
- insufficient planning and co-ordination of training
- inadequate arrangements for quality assurance

Information & communications technology

Using IT

Strengths

- good retention rates
- good development of practical skills
- good support to gain appropriate employment
- good integration of key skills with vocational training

Weaknesses

- insufficiently detailed target-setting for individuals
- inadequate use of individual learning plans
- insufficient structured employer involvement in training and assessment

Retailing, customer service & transportation

Retailing

Strengths

- good support to secure employment
- enthusiastic and motivated learners
- good range of qualifications taken by learners

Weaknesses

- slow progress towards completion of frameworks
- poor retention rates for NVQ learners
- late introduction of technical certificates
- insufficient planning and co-ordination of training
- poor quality assurance of assessment and training

Customer service

Strengths

- good support to secure employment
- enthusiastic and motivated learners
- good range of qualifications taken by learners

Weaknesses

- slow progress towards completion of frameworks
- poor retention rates for NVQ learners
- late introduction of technical certificates
- insufficient planning and co-ordination of training
- poor quality assurance of assessment and training

PROSTART

Call centre operations

Strengths

- good support to secure employment
- enthusiastic and motivated learners
- good range of qualifications taken by learners

Weaknesses

- slow progress towards completion of frameworks
- poor retention rates for NVQ learners
- late introduction of technical certificates
- insufficient planning and co-ordination of training
- poor quality assurance of assessment and training

Foundation programmes

Employability/employment training

Strengths

- good retention rates for learners
- good learning sessions
- good support for learners
- well-matched job placements

Weaknesses

- insufficient use of progress reviews on learning plans
- insufficiently planned progression routes
- insufficient quality assurance of training

WHAT LEARNERS LIKE ABOUT PROSTART:

- friendly, approachable staff - 'this is like my second home'
- the support they receive - 'they're always there for you'
- confidence building and being prepared for job interviews and work
- getting a good job and earning money while learning
- 'not being taught like in school, but being guided and coached'
- feeling motivated by the feedback given after assessments - 'they make NVQs fun'
- flexibility of assessors to reschedule appointments
- 'all the extra stuff like trips and outdoor activities'

WHAT LEARNERS THINK PROSTART COULD IMPROVE:

- the induction - all learners should have the same amount
- more opportunities for ICT training in the centre
- more notice of training sessions at the centre
- the time for exams - they should be on a Saturday
- more learning materials to take home to study for accounts courses
- more frequent training at the centre for accounts course
- the training groups at the college for accounts courses - they should be smaller

KEY CHALLENGES FOR PROSTART:

- fully implement an effective quality assurance system
- develop strategic planning
- increase staff awareness and understanding of equal opportunities
- better engage employers in the learning process
- develop and implement an effective strategy for literacy and numeracy
- improve the use of learning plans
- raise achievement rates
- improve the planning and co-ordination of training

DETAILED INSPECTION FINDINGS

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Grade 4

Strengths

- open and transparent management style
- good internal communications and team working
- good range of professional development for staff
- particularly effective measures to ensure suitable work placements for learners

Weaknesses

- inadequate strategic planning
- no strategy for literacy and numeracy
- inadequate arrangements for quality assurance
- weak internal verification
- insufficient appropriate staff training in equality and diversity

38. The management style is open and transparent. Until recently, most staff reported directly to the managing director. Now a new structure includes co-ordinators for administration, work-based learning and skills for life programmes. Staff are fully aware of the values of the organisation and have open access to managers at all times. They are well supported by managers and are well informed.

39. The new co-ordinators carry out individual progress meetings with each member of staff every month. These are effective and keep staff informed and monitor staff performance. Managers are approachable and open to suggestions from staff. All members of staff have copies of the self-assessment report, the three-year development plan and the action plan from the self-assessment. Staff are aware of the organisation's quality assurance arrangements even though many of these are new and not yet fully implemented. Staff meet regularly, including for daily updates in the mornings, and these meetings are recorded, but there is insufficient detail about the areas discussed. Actions are not clearly recorded or allocated to individual staff.

40. Many of the staff are taking professional qualifications and training. All staff have up-to-date job descriptions and most are clear about their job roles. All staff have an annual appraisal with their manager and an individual learning plan. A comprehensive organisation learning plan is maintained. This includes details of staff qualifications, training needs and development plans and a good range of success criteria to measure the impact of the development activity. Many staff are taking professional qualifications such as teacher training, the certificate in personnel practice and NVQs in training and development. Progress is monitored through monthly meetings between individual staff and managers. All staff have a continuous professional development logbook.

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41. Prostart maintains adequate data on learners and makes appropriate use of this to monitor the organisation's performance. A range of reports are produced each month and managers use them to discuss targets with staff. New reports are being developed to help assessors monitor the progress of individual learners, and an effective colour-coding system is used to highlight learners who are behind schedule or are at risk of not completing in an appropriate time frame. Data is appropriately used to monitor retention and achievement rates and for the self-assessment process.

42. Health and safety policies and procedures are thorough and are implemented to a satisfactory standard. Employers' premises are given an initial check by Prostart's health and safety officer, and are then subject to regular monitoring by assessors. There have been instances where Prostart's procedures have identified points of non-compliance with health and safety regulations and ensured appropriate action was taken by the employer.

43. Prostart does not plan strategically for the development of the organisation or the training programmes for learners. The managing director has a clear view of the values of the organisation, although these are not written down. There is no clear strategy for the development of the organisation. Directors have ideas and views on how Prostart will develop, but this is not clearly written or planned. For example, the organisation does not have a strategy to achieve its equal opportunities policy. The business plan is very broad with few clear aims and objectives. The three-year development plan is not strategic. It includes a lot of detailed actions, but these do not derive from a clearly articulated strategy. The aims, values and targets for Prostart are not adequately shared with partners and employers. Prostart recently signed a contract to deliver training as part of the ETP, but this was not part of an overall strategy for the organisation. The contract was signed with insufficient checking as to what needed to be delivered and whether it was appropriate or achievable. Prostart did not adequately evaluate the contract before entering into it. Prostart has a view that it needs to improve retention and achievement rates and there are some actions written in various documents, but there is no overall strategy for this. The organisation has set a target to improve the retention rates in the three-year plan, but has not set a target for achievement.

44. Prostart does not have a working strategy for the development of learners' literacy, numeracy and language skills. A new member of staff is developing a skills for life strategy which is beginning to deal with this, but it is in the early stages of development. The member of staff has a clear view of what needs to be done but this is yet to be agreed and implemented.

Equality of opportunity

Contributory grade 4

45. There is a well-developed and well-established culture in the organisation of being dedicated to providing opportunities for disadvantaged learners to secure work placements through training. Senior managers are particularly active in securing work-placement opportunities for learners to match their interests and needs. Once in a work placement learners receive good pastoral support, through monthly reviews and by

telephone, e-mail or text messages. Any problems that learners have in a work placement are quickly identified and acted upon. There have been a number of instances where learners have been moved from unsuitable placements. Learners who have learning or behavioural problems are offered additional support, including counselling and opportunities for supplementary training such as personal presentation skills. For example, at the time of the inspection one learner with dyspraxia was being given intensive supplementary coaching to enable him to keep his placement.

46. There are policies and procedures for equal opportunities, and these are included in the learner and staff handbooks. Equal opportunities is also included in the inductions, as well as the progress review documents. There is an equality of opportunity action plan and equality and diversity are included in the development plan, but these two documents do not systematically relate to each other. Until November 2003, there was an equal opportunities officer who was responsible for promoting equality and diversity and driving an equality and diversity agenda within the organisation. Since her departure, equality of opportunity responsibilities have been divided among other officers, but little has been done to maintain the previous agenda.

47. Data on ethnicity, gender, age group and declared disabilities is collected and presented routinely at staff meetings. Targets for equal opportunities have also been agreed with the LSC for under-represented groups. However, the data and targets have not been used to prepare a strategic plan to deal with concerns relating to equality and diversity. There is very little strategic planning to set equal opportunities-related objectives for the organisation or establish appropriate mechanisms to monitor progress.

48. Most of the learners receive equality and diversity training in their induction, and many are able to recall at least some of the content. However, over a quarter of the learners who were already in employment when they started their studies have not received such an induction. At the time of the inspection, a new system was being introduced to reinforce the learners' awareness of equal and diversity during progress reviews, but it is too soon to assess its effectiveness. Most of the staff are aware of the statistics being reported on in staff meetings, but few are aware of the targets for under-represented groups which have been agreed with the LSC.

49. Access to the main premises is severely restricted for learners with restricted mobility. Prostart has recently taken on an additional property near the main premises with a ground floor training room as well as adapted toilets. The new property will enable better access, but the two entrances have high steps without ramps.

50. New employers are checked, and if they do not have their own equal opportunities policies, they are asked to sign a document agreeing to Prostart's policies and procedures. Employers are not systematically monitored once a learner has been placed with them. However, there have been a number of instances where learners have been removed from an employer because concerns have emerged about their corporate culture, or where the learner has complained about episodes of harassment or discrimination. Equal opportunities is not included in agreements with subcontractors and is not systematically monitored.

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51. Officers who have responsibility for equality of opportunity have received little training in equality and diversity and do not understand recent legislation. Staff who interview potential learners and work with learners have not had appropriate training in how to handle learners with additional needs. This has recently been identified by the line manager who is responsible for those staff and efforts are ongoing to identify appropriate training programmes. The previous equal opportunities officer regularly attended external training courses on equality and diversity, but since her departure, the officers who have taken over her responsibilities have not received any such training.

Quality assurance

Contributory grade 4

52. Prostart has recently developed a new quality assurance policy and a comprehensive set of detailed procedures. The previous quality assurance system contained a range of administrative procedures, but did not adequately identify how key training and assessment processes would be managed or quality assured. The new procedures are particularly well thought out and cover all of the key processes which affect learners. Each procedure includes a clear flow chart, a good range of quality assurance measures and is supported by work instructions. However, many of the quality assurance measures are not yet being used and significant weaknesses and inconsistencies in training and assessment have not been dealt with. An annual cycle of audits has been defined to check that quality procedures are implemented and remain appropriate to the needs of the business. Again, these have yet to be implemented. The planned annual quality assurance cycle includes a programme of observations of teaching and assessment but currently there is insufficient systematic observation of teaching and learning.

53. Internal verification is weak. When a learner starts with Prostart, a progress monitoring sheet is produced and this includes three dates for the verification of the learner's portfolio of evidence. On these dates assessors submit the learner's portfolio for verification. A sample of units in the portfolio is checked by an internal verifier. This is recorded and a copy is given to the assessor. This system ensures that a range of units across all learners and assessors are regularly sampled by internal verifiers. A programme of observation of assessors by internal verifiers has been included in the new quality assurance arrangements. Experienced assessors are observed annually and inexperienced assessors more frequently. Standardisation meetings with assessors are planned but have not taken place as yet. There has been insufficient sharing of good practice or standardisation of assessment practice to date. Although there is regular sampling of work and some observation of assessment practice, this information is not adequately collated to allow the development of individual assessors. Sampling of portfolios and observations is carried out by different verifiers at different times and this makes it difficult to create an overall assessment of the quality of an individual assessor's work. The outcomes of internal verification are not systematically used as part of the organisation's staff performance management system.

54. Self-assessment has been carried out annually for many years. Reports over the past three years show an inconsistent picture with little clear development or improvement in

specific areas. Strengths and weaknesses vary considerably from one year to the next. The latest report, which was produced in March 2004, accurately identified some of the key weaknesses but did not identify others. It was inconsistent across the areas of learning. The current self-assessment process is inclusive and all staff have adequate opportunity to contribute and comment on the findings. Learners and employers are asked to complete a questionnaire at the end of the learners' programme. This is used to form the judgements in the self-assessment report. The action plan which is developed from the self-assessment is used to drive the improvements in the organisation. Many of the actions are on target and the impact of these is evident.

55. Prostart subcontracts assessment and training to three other organisations and written contracts are in place. They state the service to be provided but do not set out standards of service, quality assurance and monitoring arrangements, and do not make reference to equality of opportunity. Subcontractors provide appropriate information to Prostart and there is some good informal communication between them. However, Prostart does not systematically monitor the quality of the service provided by these subcontractors. Observation of teaching in one of the subcontractors is carried out by a member of Prostart's staff who is not a qualified teacher. Some quality assurance information is obtained from subcontractors, but this information is not used systematically to monitor or manage the subcontractor.

AREAS OF LEARNING

Business administration, management & professional

Business administration, management & professional		3
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
<i>Business administration</i> - Work-based learning for young people	89	3
<i>Accounting and economics</i> - Work-based learning for young people	55	3

Business administration

Strengths

- good development of business and administration skills
- good support to secure employment
- good pastoral support

Weaknesses

- slow progress towards framework completion
- insufficient planning and co-ordination of training
- inadequate arrangements for quality assurance

Accounting and economics

Strengths

- good development of accounting skills
- good support to secure employment
- good pastoral support

Weaknesses

- slow progress towards framework completion
- insufficient planning and co-ordination of training
- inadequate arrangements for quality assurance

Achievement and standards

56. Learners develop good administration or accounting skills that they are able to use effectively in the workplace. Workplace learning opportunities are good and learners receive good on-the-job training, although this is not sufficiently planned into their overall learning programmes. Most employers give learners good opportunities to progress in

their job roles and provide them with a wide range of activities to broaden their experience. Some learners have been promoted and some make important contributions to the work of their organisations, such as developing new or revised systems to improve working practices. Portfolios are well presented and learners have a sense of pride and achievement. Many learners progress to higher-level qualifications. Retention rates are satisfactory and show an improvement over the past three years.

57. Progress towards the completion of apprenticeship frameworks is slow. Of the learners who reached their expected end date, 60 per cent continued in training, and of these, 56 per cent went on to complete the framework. Achievement has been delayed for some learners as technical certificates have only recently been introduced. Achievement of key skills tests is poor with an average of 39 per cent achievement during the past year. It is particularly poor for communications at level 3 where the pass rate is only 14 per cent. Appropriate training for key skills is insufficient and largely consists of practising past test papers.

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

LSC funded work-based learning																
Advanced modern apprenticeships (AMA)	2003-04		2002-03		2001-02		2000-01									
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
	Number of starts	18		41		53		42								
Retained*	1		4		30	57	20	48								
Successfully completed	0		3		21	40	15	36								
Still in learning	14		24		8	15	1	2								

*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									
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
	Number of starts	43		91		71		45								
Retained*	1		34		45	63	17	38								
Successfully completed	0		19		41	58	13	29								
Still in learning	37		36		2	3	1	2								

*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

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LSC funded work-based learning																	
NVQ Training	2003-04		2002-03		2001-02		2000-01										
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
	Number of starts	8		16		17		11									
Retained*	0		11		14	82	10	91									
Successfully completed	0		4		9	53	8	73									
Still in learning	7		10		3	18	1	9									

*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

58. Support for learners to secure employment in appropriate jobs is good. Learners receive good pre-employment training such as writing letters of application, preparing curriculum vitae, jobsearch and interview techniques. Their confidence in applying for jobs is significantly increased. Prostart carefully researches appropriate, supportive employers for learners with particular needs. Learners speak highly of this support and of the jobs they secure.

59. Pastoral support is good. Staff are very caring and are responsive to learners' needs. Good working relationships are established with learners who are confident in approaching them at any time. Learners receive good practical support such as transport to interviews and childcare. They are able to have confidential discussions about a wide range of personal and social problems with Prostart's social exclusion officer, who provides them with appropriate advice and guidance and refers them to external support agencies when relevant.

60. Resources are satisfactory. Staff have appropriate occupational and training and assessment qualifications and experience, although some do not have a teaching qualification. There is a range of appropriate software. Laptop computers are available for assessors to use in the workplace for training and assessment.

61. The planning and co-ordination of training is insufficient. Initial assessment is inconsistent. All learners have an assessment for literacy and numeracy but a fuller initial assessment is only completed for learners who are not employed at the start of their programme. Although appropriate additional support is provided for those identified with particular needs, initial assessment is not adequately used to plan individual learning programmes. Induction is broadly satisfactory but inconsistent. Employed learners receive a short induction by Prostart at their workplace, while non-employed learners have a more comprehensive induction at the training centre. The use of individual learning plans is ineffective. Plans are completed at the start of training but they are not detailed and do not adequately identify long-term targets or interim milestones. Learning plans are not referred to, or updated, in the review process. Employers are not

sufficiently involved in the development of individual learning plans or in progress reviews and some employers do not fully understand the apprenticeship programmes. There are no formal, structured training plans for on-the-job training, and there is little coherent planning of links between the workplace and the NVQ or key skills activities. There are no systematic arrangements for monitoring on-the-job training. Off-the-job training opportunities for administration learners are insufficient. Accounting learners who attend training at a local college do not receive continued systematic accounting training during college holidays. Target-setting is inconsistent. Many of the targets do not have clear, detailed objectives and timescales and are insufficiently specific to learning outcomes.

Leadership and management

62. Internal communications are good. Staff are well informed and appreciate the open management style. All staff participate in appraisals and monthly individual review meetings. Arrangements for staff training and development are good and many staff are working towards higher-level professional or teaching qualifications. Most staff have completed health and safety training and some have attended training courses in supporting learners with dyslexia and those with literacy and numeracy needs. The use of data to set and monitor appropriate targets is insufficient. Although targets are set for retention rates, there are none for achievement rates.

63. The promotion of equal opportunities is unsatisfactory. Learners' understanding varies and there is insufficient monitoring and reinforcement in progress reviews. There is not enough appropriate staff training in equal opportunities.

64. Quality assurance arrangements are inadequate. The management of internal verification is weak. Although assessment judgements are fair and valid, the quality of recording is inconsistent and is often insufficiently judgemental. There are no standard activities and not enough evaluation to develop assessors and improve the quality of assessment. Appropriate plans are in place for new internal verification procedures but these have not yet been implemented. The monitoring of subcontractors for accounting programmes is inadequate. Adequate contracts are in place but there is no formal systematic procedure for review. There is much informal communication with subcontractors, but it is not recorded and not structured to effectively monitor provision. Copies of subcontractors' lesson observations are received and Prostart also observes some sessions, but these are not adequately evaluated. The use of quality assurance to improve training and learning is insufficient. The training observation system is not used effectively to make improvements and there is insufficient sharing of good practice. Inconsistencies in practices and documents are not adequately monitored. All staff are involved in the assessment process.

Information & communications technology

Information & communications technology		3
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
<i>Using IT</i> - Work-based learning for young people	11	3

Using IT

Strengths

- good retention rates
- good development of practical skills
- good support to gain appropriate employment
- good integration of key skills with vocational training

Weaknesses

- insufficiently detailed target-setting for individuals
- inadequate use of individual learning plans
- insufficient structured employer involvement in training and assessment

Achievement and standards

65. The retention rates are good on modern apprenticeship programmes. Of the 30 learners who started foundation modern apprenticeships between 2000 and 2004, 22 have either been retained or are still in learning. Of the six learners who started advanced modern apprenticeships during the same time period, five have been retained or are still in learning.

66. Learners show good development of practical skills. They are competent in using a wide range of computer software to solve business problems. For example, one learner regularly uses engineering software, another maintains and updates the website for his organisation, and another has designed and implemented a spreadsheet solution to computerise the financial records for her department.

67. The achievement rates for foundation modern apprentices are satisfactory. Between 2000 and 2003, 24 learners started the programme. Nine have completed the framework and six are still in learning. The learners who are currently on the programme are making satisfactory or better progress towards the achievement of the NVQ and key skills. The achievement rates for advanced modern apprentices are poor. Of the five starts between 2000 and 2002, only one learner completed the framework.

LSC funded work-based learning																
Advanced modern apprenticeships (AMA)																
	2003-04		2002-03		2001-02		2000-01									
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number of starts			1		2		3									
Retained*			0		2	100	2	67								
Successfully completed			0		1	50	0	0								
Still in learning			1		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

LSC funded work-based learning																
Foundation modern apprenticeships (FMA)																
	2003-04		2002-03		2001-02		2000-01									
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number of starts	6		12		6		6									
Retained*	0		6		3	50	1	17								
Successfully completed	0		5		3	50	1	17								
Still in learning	4		6		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

LSC funded work-based learning																
NVQ Training																
	2003-04		2002-03		2001-02		2000-01									
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number of starts			1				4									
Retained*			0	0			1	25								
Successfully completed			0	0			1	25								
Still in learning			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

68. Learners are helped in their search for employment. Prostart has developed good working relationships with organisations and the recruitment officers are successful in matching applicants to appropriate job vacancies. However, Prostart has found it difficult to find employers and this restricts the numbers of learners who are able to join the programme.

69. Key skills are an integral part of the vocational programme. The collection of evidence starts early in the learners' programme. Learners are aware of how to claim exemptions from key skills tests and make good use of evidence for accreditation of prior

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attainment. Learners receive frequent visits from assessors for training and assessment. Portfolios show a good range of assessment evidence with significant use of direct observation. Assessment feedback is constructive.

70. Target-setting on assessment plans is insufficiently detailed. Targets are too general and insufficiently specific and measurable.

71. Progress reviews are satisfactory. Reviewers meet with learners at least every 12 weeks and most reviews include employers, although some of the employers' written comments are brief. Many of the targets are insufficiently detailed and do not include specific measurable outcomes.

72. Training takes place on the job. Learners use a wide range of industry standard software and modern hardware. Assessors have, or are working towards, appropriate occupational, assessment and training qualifications. Of the four assessors, two are qualified and are accreditation of prior learning advisers.

73. The initial interview and assessment process is mostly satisfactory. All learners have an initial interview and complete a literacy and numeracy diagnostic test. However, the results are not adequately used in the individual learning plan. Those who need additional support, receive it individually.

74. Inadequate use is made of individual learning plans. While Prostart works with the learner and their employer to identify individual needs, these are not recorded to produce an individual learning plan. Some learners are not sure of their target achievement dates for NVQ units. The individual learning plan contains insufficient reference to learners' existing skills or experience, and does not adequately record the results of diagnostic tests. Employers do not have a copy of the individual learning plan.

75. Employers are insufficiently involved in training and assessment. Prostart has good working relationships with employers and the standard of employment provides good opportunities for the development of practical skills. However, some employers have insufficient understanding of the apprenticeship frameworks. The employers' involvement in progress reviews and their written comments are not sufficiently consistent. While assessors make frequent visits to learners to provide individual training, there is insufficient joint planning of on-the-job learning opportunities. Some work-based supervisors and employers have a poor understanding of the training programme.

Leadership and management

76. Members of staff are kept well informed of activities in the organisation through frequent formal and informal staff briefings. There is an effective system of monthly individual meetings between assessors and the work-based learning co-ordinator to review personal targets and the learners' progress.

77. All staff have an annual appraisal and action plans and training development plans

are developed. Staff are appraised against their job roles, but there are insufficient links to strategic objectives. There is good staff development to support the achievement of appropriate assessment and training qualifications. However, there has been insufficient training in equality and diversity.

78. Although internal verification records show regular activities, there is insufficient activity relating to standardisation. A new internal verification procedure has been implemented, but it is too early to judge its impact on the organisation.

79. The self-assessment report did not identify many of the strengths and all of the weaknesses identified through the inspection. Some of the strengths were no more than normal practice and other strengths were founded on unreliable data.

Retailing, customer service & transportation

Retailing, customer service & transportation		4
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Retailing - Work-based learning for young people	10	4
Customer service - Work-based learning for young people	43	4
Call centre operations - Work-based learning for young people	14	4

Retailing

Strengths

- good support to secure employment
- enthusiastic and motivated learners
- good range of qualifications taken by learners

Weaknesses

- slow progress towards completion of frameworks
- poor retention rates for NVQ learners
- late introduction of technical certificates
- insufficient planning and co-ordination of training
- poor quality assurance of assessment and training

Customer service

Strengths

- good support to secure employment
- enthusiastic and motivated learners
- good range of qualifications taken by learners

Weaknesses

- slow progress towards completion of frameworks
- poor retention rates for NVQ learners
- late introduction of technical certificates
- insufficient planning and co-ordination of training
- poor quality assurance of assessment and training

Call centre operations

Strengths

- good support to secure employment
- enthusiastic and motivated learners
- good range of qualifications taken by learners

Weaknesses

- slow progress towards completion of frameworks
- poor retention rates for NVQ learners
- late introduction of technical certificates
- insufficient planning and co-ordination of training
- poor quality assurance of assessment and training

Achievement and standards

80. Learners are enthusiastic and motivated and have a positive attitude towards their learning and employment. They are motivated by assessor's feedback on the work they have produced. Learners are very appreciative of the individual support given on the regular visits made by assessors. Learners are well presented and talk articulately about their job roles and training programmes. Learners are quick to adapt to changes in their employment and are keen to pursue other qualifications. Learners are ambitious and they develop skills which allow them to work independently and with others. Many learners have progressed into supervisory roles.

81. There is slow progress towards the completion of frameworks. Of the 107 learners who have completed their training since 2000, 64 per cent continued beyond their expected end date. Some learners do not pass their key skills tests at the first attempt despite support from assessors. The support offered for key skills is mostly through the learner practising past tests rather than specific coaching by suitably qualified staff. Retention rates are satisfactory for advanced modern apprentices at 42 per cent for 2000-01 and 50 per cent for 2001-02. Retention rates for foundation modern apprentices have improved during the same period from 64 per cent to 66 per cent. Recruitment for 2002-03 and 2003-04 is slightly reduced.

82. The retention rates for NVQ learners are poor. Of the 21 who have started since 2000, 11 have left without completing the framework.

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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										
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
	Number of starts	8		28		26		38									
Retained*	1		4		11	42	18	47									
Successfully completed	1		3		8	31	10	26									
Still in learning	7		12		2	8	0	0									

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

LSC funded work-based learning																	
Foundation modern apprenticeships (FMA)	2003-04		2002-03		2001-02		2000-01										
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
	Number of starts	26		30		35		42									
Retained*	3		10	33	23	66	27	64									
Successfully completed	3		6	20	14	40	22	52									
Still in learning	20		8	27	6	17	0	0									

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

LSC funded work-based learning																	
NVQ Training	2003-04		2002-03		2001-02		2000-01										
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
	Number of starts	10		5		10		6									
Retained*	0		1	20	5	50	4	67									
Successfully completed	0		0	0	5	50	2	33									
Still in learning	9		1	20	0	0	2	33									

*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

83. Prostart provides learners with good support to help them gain employment. When learners are recruited onto programmes they are trained in health and safety, equal opportunities and jobsearch skills which include letter writing, telephoning employers or cold calling. Prostart also uses its network of employers and contacts them on behalf of learners. The learners' requests for certain occupational sectors are taken into account when employers are selected. Once a learner has completed a trial period, Prostart requests that the learner becomes employed. Learners who are already employed

develop skills that help them to progress onto other positions with their employers. The regular visits from the assessors and reviewers allow learners to discuss their problems and aims. Additional advice and support is available from staff, and learners know they can use Prostart to help them look for other employment. If a learner changes employment assessors work hard to retain the learner on a programme. Prostart's staff are committed to getting unemployed learners a job and 25 per cent of the 30 per cent who were unemployed are now employed.

84. A good range of qualifications are taken by learners. The opportunity for additional qualifications is readily available once a learner has completed their programme. If a learner changes employer or job role, they are offered a more suitable qualification. Learners can take qualifications in customer service, retailing, warehousing, sales, call handling or management. Employers are very supportive and allow assessors regular access to learners. Time is allowed for learners to leave their work station or the shop floor when the assessors need to discuss evidence. Assessors are sensitive to learners' and employers' needs in the workplace. The use of prior achievement from previous qualifications is used when learners pursue another qualification. If a learner progresses onto another modern apprenticeship the key skills and enhanced units are claimed from previous qualifications.

85. The introduction of technical certificates for retailing and customer service modern apprentices has not been implemented early enough. Recommended material has been purchased by Prostart, but this is not being used effectively by all staff.

86. There is insufficient planning and co-ordination of training. Learners who attend Prostart before employment receive a more comprehensive induction and initial assessment than learners who are already employed. Some learners have an initial assessment of literacy and numeracy, key skills, occupational skills and learning styles, but it is not systematic and individual learning plans do not fully capture this information. Employers do not fully understand the frameworks and are not given qualification outlines for each learner. Employers allow Prostart to carry out all assessment and only contribute to portfolio evidence by signing witness testimonies. Although recent initiatives have been developed to improve the initial assessment for all learners, it has not been fully implemented as yet. Assessors coach learners individually and employer training is available, but there is little structure or systematic recording of the training received. Assessors supply some resources for the background knowledge element of the NVQ, but it varies across assessors.

Leadership and management

87. Prostart does not ensure the standardisation of assessor's decisions or assessment and training records. The standardisation of each unit of the qualifications offered has not been carried out or planned. Model answers for set questions for the customer service level 3 NVQ are not discussed and learners' answers are not always sufficient. Internal verification concentrates only on sampling portfolios and the minimum observation of assessors. Portfolio evidence is satisfactory, but observations vary in

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quality and length and feedback is not always recorded for learners after each assessment. Opportunities to share good practice are not taken. Although some assessors have updated their knowledge on current assessor standards, no one holds the new internal verification/quality assurance qualification. Assessors have a whiteboard next to their desk, which monitors learners' achievement against the framework, but this is inconsistent across assessors. New records are being piloted, but they have not been evaluated as yet. A lead internal verifier has been appointed to implement standardisation initiatives.

88. Support is given to learners with additional needs. Some assessors have attended training to deliver literacy and numeracy skills, but it has not resulted in recognised qualifications. There has been no quality assurance of this in the workplace. Resources for key skills and literacy and numeracy training have been purchased, but assessors tend to use assessment rather than coaching methods. Literacy and numeracy training is delivered at Prostart for learners who are not employed.

89. Equal opportunities is included in the induction and learners are aware of the complaints and appeals process. New material to introduce new legislation has been used and is helping learners to understand equality of opportunity. However, some of the learners have not completed this training.

90. The self-assessment report was insufficiently self-critical and only recognised some of the strengths and weaknesses.

Foundation programmes

Foundation programmes		3
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
<i>Employability/employment training</i> - Work-based learning for young people	17	3

Employability/employment training

Strengths

- good retention rates for learners
- good learning sessions
- good support for learners
- well-matched job placements

Weaknesses

- insufficient use of progress reviews on learning plans
- insufficiently planned progression routes
- insufficient quality assurance of training

Achievement and standards

91. Since the start of this programme in August 2003, there have been 41 starts and 42 per cent of learners have been retained. Thirty-two per cent have moved into further education or have gained a job. There are good opportunities to participate in relevant work tasters where learners gain social skills and confidence. Learners' aims form an important part of this process.

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

LSC funded work-based learning																
Entry to Employment	2003-04															
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
	Number of starts	41														
Progression ¹	12															
Achieved objectives ²	1															
Still in learning	17															

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

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

Quality of education and training

92. Learning sessions are good. Lessons are prepared well in advance and attention is paid to content, relevance and outcomes. Subjects are taught in a creative way to ensure the engagement of learners in the learning process. One session involved measurement where, in addition to the theory of weights and measures, the learners were asked to estimate the weight of grocery products before weighing them using modern and historical scales. Learners not only learnt a significant amount in the lesson, they also clearly improved their social skills and confidence. Training is given to small groups of up to eight learners with supplementary training given individually.

93. There is good support for learners. Staff work enthusiastically with learners and help reduce or remove their barriers to learning. Learners with personal difficulties are encouraged to discuss them with staff who are well qualified to advise. Learners who have difficulties in expressing themselves are encouraged to produce plays and poetry to communicate. Learners who have specific needs are given individual help or training. For example, one learner was given training in interview techniques to improve his prospects at a job interview. Learners comment on the fun side of learning, which is entirely new to them. They appreciate going on trips to places like science parks and places of interest, and opportunities to play sports.

94. Learners' placements with employers are well matched. Learners views are actively sought and appropriate work tasters are sourced to match these. Learners then give comments and other work sectors are tried as and when appropriate. When a learner agrees on a work vocation the provider works very hard to secure a good placement. Learners are matched with employers that are able to offer permanent positions or provide extended trials which include vocational training.

95. Resource materials are varied, relevant and tailored to the needs of specific individuals. A number of portfolios have photographs to reinforce key messages, particularly with regard to health and safety. The extra premises near Prostart's main office has provided E2E learners with their own training room, recreational facilities, and computers for their project work.

96. Progress reviews are not used for learning plans. The learners are not fully aware of their progress to date and are only aware of their next assignment. Learners are praised when they do well and are helped if they have difficulties, but it is not clear what this means in terms of programme direction or outcome. Learners are making progress in literacy and numeracy, vocational and social abilities, but there is no differentiation in lesson plans to reflect this.

97. Progression is insufficiently planned. Learners apply for a permanent job once they achieve a level 1 qualification, or move to a different programme, but this is not planned as a targeted outcome within a time frame.

98. An additional co-ordinator for literacy and numeracy has been appointed and assessment and diagnostic processes are being reconsidered.

99. Tutors are well qualified and are empathetic to learners' needs. Learners have training in health and safety, equal opportunities, diversity and grievance as part of their induction, and this is reinforced with updates and projects on an ongoing basis. Learners make many positive comments about the interest, enthusiasm and support given by staff.

Leadership and management

100. There is insufficient quality assurance of the E2E programme. Some internal verification has taken place and one portfolio has been partly assessed, but records are incomplete and some of the reviews have been missed. There are inconsistencies in learners' paperwork and some delays in identifying problems. The self-assessment report is insufficiently self-critical and does not identify all strengths and weaknesses.

101. The E2E team members work well together and work hard to support the learners. Ideas are shared and there are new plans to enhance assessment, learning plans and the recognition of potential. They attend weekly business meetings and are encouraged to give their opinions. Appraisals are carried out on an annual basis and there are monthly meetings to assess performance against targets.

102. Staff have not received appropriate training to keep up to date with equal opportunities legislation.