

# REINSPECTION REPORT

## **CMS Vocational Training Limited Reinspection**

**11 February 2005**



ADULT LEARNING  
INSPECTORATE

## Grading

Inspectors use a seven-point scale to summarise their judgements about the quality of learning sessions. The descriptors for the seven grades are:

- *grade 1 - excellent*
- *grade 2 - very good*
- *grade 3 - good*
- *grade 4 - satisfactory*
- *grade 5 - unsatisfactory*
- *grade 6 - poor*
- *grade 7 - very poor.*

Inspectors use a five-point scale to summarise their judgements about the quality of provision in occupational/curriculum areas. The same scale is used to describe the quality of leadership and management, which includes quality assurance and equality of opportunity. The descriptors for the five grades are:

- *grade 1 - outstanding*
- *grade 2 - good*
- *grade 3 - satisfactory*
- *grade 4 - unsatisfactory*
- *grade 5 - very weak.*

The two grading scales relate to each other as follows:

SEVEN-POINT SCALE	FIVE-POINT SCALE
grade 1	grade 1
grade 2	
grade 3	grade 2
grade 4	grade 3
grade 5	grade 4
grade 6	grade 5
grade 7	

## Adult Learning Inspectorate

The Adult Learning Inspectorate (ALI) was established under the provisions of the *Learning and Skills Act 2000* to bring the inspection of all aspects of adult learning and work-based learning within the remit of a single inspectorate. The ALI is responsible for inspecting a wide range of government-funded learning, including:

- work-based learning for all people over 16
- provision in further education colleges for people aged 19 and over
- the University for Industry's **learndirect** provision
- Adult and Community Learning
- learning and job preparation programmes funded by Jobcentre Plus
- education and training in prisons, at the invitation of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Prisons.

Inspections are carried out in accordance with the *Common Inspection Framework* by teams of full-time inspectors and part-time associate inspectors who have knowledge of, and experience in, the work which they inspect. All providers are invited to nominate a senior member of their staff to participate in the inspection as a team member.

# REINSPECTION REPORT

## CMS Vocational Training Limited Reinspection

### Contents

#### Summary

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

#### Detailed reinspection findings

Leadership and management	7
Equality of opportunity	8
Quality assurance	9
Business administration, management & professional	11
Retailing, customer service & transportation	14

## REINSPECTION REPORT

### DESCRIPTION OF THE PROVIDER

1. CMS Vocational Training Limited (CMS) was established in 1982. It is located in the Kirklees and Calderdale area of West Yorkshire and has premises in Batley, Halifax and Huddersfield, which is the main administrative centre. CMS employs 37 members of staff. It is a private training company which is owned by four directors. CMS was accredited with the Investors in People standard in 1992, which is a national standard for improving an organisation's performance through its people.
2. CMS is contracted by the West Yorkshire Learning and Skills Council (LSC) to provide work-based learning for young people in business administration, and retailing and customer service. The scope of the reinspection covered the LSC contract for work-based learning for young people.
3. Other training which CMS provides includes a contract with Jobcentre Plus for training adults. CMS also provides entry to employment training (E2E), as part of a group of 15 providers in the area. Other training provided by CMS includes franchised courses for a local college and some commercial training for local companies.

### SCOPE OF PROVISION

#### **Business administration, management & professional**

4. CMS provides national vocational training (NVQ) training in business administration at level 2 and 3. At the time of the reinspection, there were 22 learners, including three advanced apprentices and 19 foundation apprentices. Learners who are not employed before joining CMS are usually referred by Connexions and some apply direct from newspaper advertisements. Induction and initial assessment for learners who are not employed takes place during a four-week introductory course at the training centre. For employed learners, the same induction is provided over a six-week period mainly in the workplace. Learners attend off-the-job training at the centre. They are assessed at work by visiting assessors. All learners are visited at least once a month to review progress and plan training and assessment.

#### **Retailing, customer service & transportation**

5. CMS provides training for 17 learners, of whom 14 are foundation apprentices in retailing or customer service, one is an advanced apprentice in customer service and two are on NVQ-only training. Learners are referred to the programme by Connexions, by their employers or are self-referred. All are employed by local employers. Workplaces range from small specialist supermarkets to national retail outlets, mail order companies, call centres, solicitors and manufacturing warehouses. The retailing team consists of three full-time and two part-time staff. Four are qualified assessors and the fifth is working towards the award. Two of the team are internal verifiers and one is a specialist tutor for literacy and numeracy.

## ABOUT THE REINSPECTION

Number of inspectors	2
Number of inspection days	12
Number of learner interviews	17
Number of staff interviews	15
Number of employer interviews	10
Number of locations/sites/learning centres visited	3
Number of partner/external agency interviews	1

## OVERALL JUDGEMENT

6. At the previous inspection in November 2003, leadership and management and quality assurance were unsatisfactory. Equality of opportunity and ICT were satisfactory. Training in business administration, management and professional, and retailing, customer service and transportation were unsatisfactory. At the end of the reinspection process, all aspects of provision are good.

## GRADES

Grades awarded at previous inspection

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

<b>Leadership and management</b>	<b>4</b>
Contributory grades:	
Equality of opportunity	3
Quality assurance	4

<b>Business administration, management &amp; professional</b>	<b>4</b>
Contributory grades:	
Work-based learning for young people	4

<b>Information &amp; communications technology</b>	<b>3</b>
Contributory grades:	
New Deal 25+ and work-based learning for adults	3

<b>Retailing, customer service &amp; transportation</b>	<b>4</b>
Contributory grades:	
Work-based learning for young people	4

## Grades awarded at reinspection

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

Leadership and management	2
Contributory grades:	
Equality of opportunity	2
Quality assurance	2

Business administration, management & professional	2
Contributory grades:	
Work-based learning for young people	2

Retailing, customer service & transportation	2
Contributory grades:	
Work-based learning for young people	2

## KEY FINDINGS

### Achievement and standards

7. **Retention rates have improved and are now good in business administration.** Overall, 80 per cent of the learners who have started the business administration programme since the previous inspection are still in learning.
8. **Retention rates for all retailing programmes are good.** On apprenticeship programmes, the retention rate was 73 per cent in 2003-04 and currently is 86 per cent.
9. **Learners' gain good administration skills at work.** Many of the learners are in their first job and have developed a good level confidence with appropriate attitudes to work.
10. Learners' progress and achievement in business administration and retailing are satisfactory overall. Pass rates for the technical certificate and key skills are good and progress towards the achievement of NVQ units is good for most learners.

### Quality of education and training

11. **Off-the-job training is well organised and planned effectively in business administration.** Sessions cover appropriate material for key skills and for the requirements of the technical certificate. On- and off-the-job training are well co-ordinated.

12. **The preparation for work in retailing, customer service and transportation is very effective. Learners have a thorough induction programme** and initial assessment which are well planned and well structured. Effective use is made of work trials and tasters.

13. **All learners benefit from good support from CMS staff**, who visit them regularly at work. In some cases, this is weekly. Staff have a very positive approach and motivate learners.

14. **Learners have a comprehensive individual learning plan which is used effectively.** Learners are set realistic, measurable targets at each visit.

15. **Assessment is carried out appropriately.** Assessment records show an appropriate range of evidence including digital photographs and statements. Most of the work in portfolios is well organised.

### **Leadership and management**

16. **Particularly effective management actions have been carried out to raise performance.** Managers and staff are well organised and they have successfully implemented a retention and achievement strategy.

17. **Managers and staff have revised and improved some key learning processes which impact directly on learners.** CMS has increased investment in training and staffing resources.

18. **Good staff development and continued professional development have improved standards.** Learners benefit from the staff's increased skills and experience.

19. **Effective communication at CMS is supported by well-organised and regular staff and team meetings.** Vocational co-ordinators lead their teams effectively.

20. **Learners benefit from the strong links that CMS has with external organisations.** CMS plays a prominent role in strategic groups and is able to influence the development of work-based learning in the area. This has increased the range and quality of CMS's offer to learners.

21. **Overall CMS's approach to equality of opportunity and widening participation is good.** CMS has a clear commitment to equality.

22. **CMS has effectively widened participation in learning.** Outreach programmes are run to help attract minority ethnic groups into learning. Good partnerships with education, voluntary and other statutory services allow CMS to contact a diverse range of learners.

23. CMS has a diverse staff team and learner group which reflects the population of the area. CMS has flexible working practices which help attract staff and learners from



groups that are not always able to access work and training.

**24. An effective programme of equal opportunities training has been provided for staff.** This continues with further specialist training for some staff to develop their skills.

**25. Access to most premises is suitable to meet learners' needs.** However, some buildings have inappropriate access for people with restricted mobility. CMS declares this clearly in its access statements and offers alternative arrangements.

**26. A strong culture of continuous improvement is evident among the staff. Quality systems are well managed.** The post-inspection action plan has been used effectively to promote improvement and to involve all staff in the process of continuous review and improvement.

**27. Internal verification is carried out effectively** and forms an effective part of the arrangements for quality improvement. Policies, procedures, guidelines, standards and performance criteria are in place and have been agreed with the staff.

**28. Good practice guidelines have been developed and these are a good means of sharing good practice between staff.** A monthly team meeting allows evaluation and further development of the training programmes. Roles and responsibilities for quality assurance are clearly specified.

**29. Self-assessment is very effective.** The process involves all staff, learners and employers.

**30. The management information system is insufficiently responsive.** Management reports and exception reports are difficult to produce quickly. CMS has identified this weakness and plans are in place to rectify it.

**31. Some employers are insufficiently involved in planning and reviewing learners' programmes.** In some cases, the on-the-job training requirements have not been identified clearly enough to enable employers to provide suitably structured training.

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

## **Leadership and management**

### **Strengths**

- particularly effective management action to improve performance
- good staff development
- productive links with external groups
- strong culture of continuous improvement
- good approach to equality of opportunity and widening participation

### **Weaknesses**

- insufficiently responsive management information system

### **Business administration, management & professional**

#### **Strengths**

- good retention rates
- good achievement of skills
- very effective support for learners
- good off-the-job training

#### **Weaknesses**

- insufficient involvement in training by a few employers

### **Retailing, customer service & transportation**

#### **Strengths**

- good retention rates
- particularly effective preparation for work
- good support for learners
- rigorous monitoring of the programme

#### **Weaknesses**

- insufficient planning and reviewing of training by some employers

## DETAILED REINSPECTION FINDINGS

### LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

**Grade 2**

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

#### **Strengths**

- particularly effective management action to improve performance
- good staff development
- productive links with external groups
- strong culture of continuous improvement
- good approach to equality of opportunity and widening participation

#### **Weaknesses**

- insufficiently responsive management information system

32. Particularly effective management actions have been carried out to raise performance. A systematic and well-organised approach, led by the two operational directors and with commitment from the senior team, has successfully implemented a retention and achievement strategy. This has ensured that priorities for raising performance have been identified, plans are in place, targets have been identified and reviewed, and progress has been made. Staff have been very effectively involved in this process and have clear priorities. Teamwork is good and learners benefit from the very positive approach of the staff team. These actions have contributed to the improvement in performance, particularly in learners' progress, and in retention and achievement rates for the work-based learning programmes over the past 12 months. The capacity for raising performance further has also improved. Performance improvement and other positive developments, such as the development of the E2E programme, are also evident.

33. Managers and staff have revised and improved some key learning processes which impact directly on learners. Learners now receive a more thorough induction. The process offers learners a more open view of what training they can become involved in and how they might progress. Learners benefit from having more options and make better choices. Employed learners receive a more systematic induction which gives them a better understanding of the requirements of their programme over a longer period. Initial assessment has been redesigned, and now provides a better profile of learners' needs. Other key processes have also been improved, including reviews, monitoring of progress, and off-the-job training.

34. CMS has increased investment in training and staffing resources. A significant amount of money has been invested in new information and communications

## CMS VOCATIONAL TRAINING LIMITED REINSPECTION

technology (ICT) equipment. Learning resources have also been purchased to support the teaching sessions. General accommodation and training rooms are maintained to a good standard. Staffing resources are good in terms of staff to learner ratios, experience and qualifications. Learners benefit from frequent and regular visits by staff to their workplaces.

35. There is good staff development and continued professional development, and learners benefit from the increased skills and experience of the staff. CMS has continuous professional development as a strategic objective, and is making good progress in achieving the current three-year plan. Staff are well qualified and most are working towards further qualifications. For example, seven staff are working towards an NVQ at level 4 in learning and development programmes and 15 are working towards level 3. Among the staff team there are four people qualified at level 3 as skills for life trainers and one person is working towards level 4. CMS has an effective strategy for the development of literacy, numeracy and language skills.

36. Learners benefit from the strong links that CMS has with external organisations. CMS plays a prominent role in the development of the E2E programme through the local partnership, and learners have benefited from this. The development of common processes with other providers promotes good practice. CMS contributes to the development of 14-19 education and training strategy in the area and is involved in work with schools and community groups. CMS is also part of a strategic group for education and training. CMS contributes to the development of work-based learning in the area through involvement and board membership of a company set up by the provider network.

37. Effective communication at CMS is supported by well-organised and regular staff and team meetings. Vocational co-ordinators lead their teams effectively. Suitable practices relating to people management are in place. Staff are involved in their own individual development planning and all have personal targets which are directly linked to business plan targets. Business planning is inclusive and staff are kept well informed about corporate priorities. CMS has resources in place to respond to literacy and numeracy needs. Learners with English language needs are referred to a specialist provider.

38. The management information system is insufficiently responsive. Management reports and exception reports are difficult to produce quickly. The current management information system relies on an external contractor. As the pace of change in the organisation has increased, the requirement for summary management reports to be produced speedily and regularly is not always met effectively. CMS has identified this problem and appropriate plans are in place to improve the situation.

### **Equality of opportunity**

### **Contributory grade 2**

39. Overall, CMS's approach to equality of opportunity is good. It has a clear commitment to equality of opportunity and widening participation in learning. The company's commitment is demonstrated through its strategic vision statements and the

equal opportunities action plan which is authorised by the board. Two equal opportunities officers take responsibility for co-ordinating the implementation of the plan with staff and learners. The plan is reviewed every six months by the board and at full staff meetings. All staff have a copy of the plan and are clear about their role in implementing it.

40. The policy is effectively communicated to staff and learners. Staff have a good understanding of their responsibilities for equal opportunities and of the diverse local culture in which they work. Relevant policy statements are displayed in each centre. Staff and learners are introduced to the policies, and how to apply to them, during induction.

41. CMS has developed, and is now piloting, an innovative series of modules which are designed to interest and engage learners in equality of opportunity and cultural diversity. Learners benefit from involvement in projects and training sessions which further develop their understanding and awareness. A theme is chosen each month and all learners are asked questions during reviews about the theme. Staff teams review the learners' responses and decide if actions or further training are required.

42. CMS has effectively widened participation in learning. Outreach programmes are run to help attract minority groups into learning. Good partnerships with education, voluntary and other statutory services helps CMS to contact a diverse range of learners.

43. CMS has a diverse staff team and learner group which reflects the population of the area. Relevant equal opportunities data relating to marketing, recruitment, progress and achievement is collected and monitored by CMS. CMS has flexible working practices which help attract staff and learners from groups that are not always able to access work and training. Programmes are widely marketed through schools and other community groups.

44. An effective programme of equal opportunities training has been provided for staff. This continues with further specialist training for some staff to develop their skills and to promote understanding of equal opportunities. There is an appropriate complaints policy and supporting procedures. Complaints are dealt with satisfactorily and concerns are resolved constructively. Specialist equipment and/or specific arrangements are made available for learners with additional learning needs when required. Access to most premises is suitable for those with restricted mobility. However, some buildings have inappropriate access and CMS declares this clearly in its access statements and offers alternative arrangements.

### **Quality assurance**

### **Contributory grade 2**

45. A strong culture of continuous improvement is evident among the staff at CMS. The post-inspection action plan has been used effectively to promote improvement and to involve all staff in the process of continuous review and improvement. The operational directors' board and senior managers have played a very effective part in promoting improvement, have taken responsibility and have given good direction and support to

the staff.

46. All staff are involved in implementing quality assurance and have a clear view of the priorities for improvement. Staff incorporate the relevant business plans and targets into their own individual plans and targets. Overall progress against the action plan is reviewed monthly at board meeting and at staff team meetings. CMS regularly and systematically seeks the views of learners and employers about the services it provides. Concerns are identified, actions are taken and improvements are made.

47. Learners benefit from comprehensive quality assurance arrangements which cover all the main processes involved in work-based learning. These include observation of teaching, which is well organised and leads to improvements. However, the quality assurance of on-the-job training is not yet fully developed. Internal verification is carried out effectively and forms an effective part of the arrangements for quality improvement. Policies, procedures, guidelines, standards and performance criteria are in place and have been agreed with the staff.

48. Good practice guidelines have been developed and these are a good means of sharing good practice between staff. A monthly quality team meeting is a good focus for evaluation and for the further development of the training programmes. Roles and responsibilities for quality assurance are clearly specified.

49. Self-assessment is very effective. The process involves all the staff, learners and employers. The current self-assessment report is an honest appraisal of training programmes at CMS and deals with learner progress and achievement effectively. The report identifies all the strengths and weaknesses that were identified through the reinspection, although not all of them were regarded as key by the inspection team.

## AREAS OF LEARNING

### Business administration, management & professional

### Grade 2

Programmes inspected	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Work-based learning for young people	22	2

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

#### Strengths

- good retention rates
- good achievement of skills
- very effective support for learners
- good off-the-job training

#### Weaknesses

- insufficient involvement in training by a few employers

#### Achievement and standards

50. Retention rates have improved and are now good in business administration. For the learners who started apprenticeship programmes in 2003-04, the retention rate was 78 per cent. Of the learners who started during 2004-2005, all are still in learning. The retention rate for advanced apprentices in 2003-04 was 75 per cent. Overall, 80 per cent of the learners who started the business administration programme since the previous inspection have remained in learning.

51. Learners' achievement of skills at work is good. Many learners are in their first job and they have developed a good level of self-confidence and an appropriate attitude to work. Learners deal confidently with members of the public and work colleagues and demonstrate good communication skills. Learners use the telephone and other ICT confidently. Some learners take full responsibility for important tasks such as database administration and mail merge procedures. Employers value the learners' contribution to the team.

52. Learners' progress and achievement are satisfactory overall. Pass rates for the technical certificate and key skills are good and progress towards the achievement of NVQ units is good for most learners. Since the previous inspection, the framework completion rate has improved from 12 per cent for those who started during 2002-03, to 35 per cent for those who started during 2003-04, with a further 57 per cent still in learning. All learners are meeting their targets and some are progressing at a faster pace than was originally planned. A very small number of learners have taken longer than

their plan specified.

### **Quality of education and training**

53. Off-the-job training is well organised and planned effectively. Sessions include material for key skills and the technical certificate. Learners make good progress in off-the-job sessions and effectively develop the skills, understanding and knowledge required for their programme. Teaching and support for learners is good in off-the-job training sessions. Tutors have a good working relationship with learners and help to increase learners' confidence well. On- and off-the-job training are well co-ordinated. Learners benefit from contact with their assessors through work visits and during off-the-job training sessions.

54. Learners benefit from good support from CMS. In some cases, staff visit every week. Staff have a good understanding of individual needs and respond to them well. Training is effectively planned and learners are given clear guidance about work tasks and assessment opportunities. Short-term targets are set and reviewed effectively. Additional individual support is arranged when required. Learners' progress is monitored during effective progress reviews.

55. Induction, initial assessment and regular assessment are carried out thoroughly. All learners benefit from an induction period which gives a structured introduction to the training programmes, employment rights and responsibilities and consideration of learners' potential and needs. For unemployed learners, the induction also includes guidance and advice on jobs and employment prospects. Placements are carefully selected to match learners' needs.

56. CMS has satisfactory assessment systems for identifying learners with literacy and numeracy needs. These needs are met through additional guided learning sessions, often including individual coaching. Learners who need language support are referred to a specialist agency.

### **Leadership and management**

57. Retention, achievement, progress and improvements are regular agenda items at meetings. Overall monitoring of learners' progress is effective.

58. Staff teams are well managed and are kept informed about future direction and developments. Staff are very involved in planning and carrying out improvements. They identify and share good practice and work together with other teams to raise standards. Meetings are well organised and take place frequently.

59. Staff are clear about their roles responsibilities and individual targets. Teaching and learning is effectively covered by quality assurance arrangements. Internal verification is carried out thoroughly and contributes to the development of assessors' practices and standards. CMS's policy for equality of opportunity is implemented effectively in the



area of learning. Quality assurance arrangements work well and staff are very involved in continuous improvement. The self-assessment report for the area of learning was particularly good in the way it dealt with data and judgements about retention and achievement.

60. Some employers are not sufficiently involved in learners' programmes. In some cases, the on-the-job training requirements have not been identified well enough for the employer to provide effective and planned training. Employers have a general understanding of the requirements of the framework and have been provided with relevant information. They also take part in reviews. However, CMS has identified the need to further involve employers in a more structured approach to on-the-job training. Appropriate development plans are in place to make improvements in this area.

**Retailing, customer service & transportation**

**Grade 2**

Programmes inspected	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Work-based learning for young people	17	2

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

**Strengths**

- good retention rates
- particularly effective preparation for work
- good support for learners
- rigorous monitoring of the programme

**Weaknesses**

- insufficient planning and reviewing of training by some employers

**Achievement and standards**

61. Retention rates are good on all programmes. The retention rate for 2003-04 was 73 per cent for apprentice programmes and for this year is 86 per cent. The number of advanced apprentices is low, but retention rates are 100 per cent for both years. On NVQ programmes, the retention rate has risen from 48 per cent in 2002-03 to 79 per cent in 2003-04.

62. Achievement rates are much improved since the previous inspection. For example, framework completions have risen from 18 per cent in 2001-02 to 27 per cent in 2002-03, and 47 per cent of learners are still in learning. The NVQ achievement rate has improved from 48 per cent in 2002-03 to 64 per cent in 2003-04, and 14 per cent of learners are still in learning.

63. Learners are making good progress towards completing the frameworks. Individual units are now certificated. Current learners have a 100 per cent success rate in technical certificate external tests. Skills development at work is satisfactory and good in some cases.

64. Some learners progress onto retailing and customer service apprenticeships from the E2E programme. Several employed learners have been promoted after achieving their qualifications.

## Quality of education and training

65. Learners benefit from very effective preparation for work in this area of learning. They have a thorough four-week induction which is well planned and well structured. CMS carries out a thorough and systematic initial assessment of learners' literacy and numeracy skills, learning styles, occupational skills, aptitudes and attitudes. Needs are effectively met through additional guided learning sessions, often including individual coaching. Learners who need language support are referred to a specialist agency. Induction includes good preparation for key skills and technical certificates.

66. Learners fully understand health and safety, equality and diversity. Effective use is made of work trials and tasters to enable learners to make informed choices. Learners are well matched to job roles which meet employers' needs and their own aims. Extended induction in the workplace is provided for employed learners, and this includes good individual coaching through workbooks and projects. Learners have a comprehensive individual learning plan covering all parts of their frameworks. Learners are set realistic, measurable targets at each workplace visit.

67. There is good all-round support for learners, including pastoral, practical, personal and learning support. Assessors use a flexible approach to assessment. For example, they use a portable recording system to record the answers to NVQ knowledge and understanding questions for a customer service learner. Several of the learners have had additional visits to accelerate their progress after absence for illness or personal problems. Assessors use accreditation of prior learning and cross-referencing to enable a learner to progress after a change of occupational area. Assessors make out-of-hours visits to capture evidence for NVQs.

68. Progress monitoring is effective. In one example, a learner who was at risk of under achieving has been supported well. By arranging additional assessment visits, help with on-the-job coaching, and personal advice and guidance, the learner has achieved a warehousing NVQ ahead of target.

69. Good use is made of resources to support learning. Assessors have initial assessment tools and learning support modules on their laptop computers and use them effectively in the workplace. Support for learners with literacy and numeracy needs is also good. Three of the staff are qualified to support literacy and numeracy in the workplace. CMS provides additional sessions to support individuals, including a Saturday morning session at one centre. Success is celebrated with articles in newsletters, in-house certificates of achievement, and a roll of honour on training centre walls.

70. Learning support materials are satisfactory. There is an adequate range of workbooks, information packs and coaching modules. A series of off-the-job training sessions for the retailing and customer services technical certificates are planned. The scheme of work, session plans and learning support materials are all structured to accommodate sessions in the workplace or at CMS training centres.

71. Assessment is carried out satisfactorily. Assessments include an appropriate range of evidence including digital photographs and learners' statements. There is, however, some over-reliance on assessors recording assessments. Learners' progress is recorded at the time of the assessment, and short-term, achievable targets are set and consistently met. The standard of learners' work in portfolios is satisfactory overall and well presented.

### **Leadership and management**

72. Improvements have been made since the previous inspection. All the previous weaknesses are now either satisfactory or strengths. Managers use information effectively and monitor overall programme performance thoroughly. A risk-assessment system is effectively used to highlight when learners are at risk of under-achieving against their targets. Assessors have monthly individual meetings with their managers to review learners' progress. Targets for progress, achievement and retention are reviewed regularly. Teamwork is good and staff are clear about their priorities.

73. Equality of opportunity is well managed for the area of learning and learners are fully aware of their rights and responsibilities. Quality assurance of the programmes is also good. The self-assessment report identified most of the strengths identified by inspectors and the main weakness. Internal verification is managed well.

74. Some employers are insufficiently involved with the planning and review of learners' programmes. In some cases, employers are well informed and influence the planning of learning and development. They take full part in reviews and are keen to be kept informed of learners' progress. However, a few employers are less involved and let CMS take sole responsibility for the learners. These employers do not attend reviews, and only sign the documents. CMS has recognised this weakness and is working to remedy the situation.