

INSPECTION REPORT

Midland Group Training Services Limited

17 December 2004



ADULT LEARNING
INSPECTORATE

Grading

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

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

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

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

The two grading scales relate to each other as follows:

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

Adult Learning Inspectorate

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

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

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

Overall judgement

Where the overall judgement is that the provision is adequate, only those aspects of the provision which are less than satisfactory will be reinspected.

Provision will normally be deemed to be inadequate where:

- more than one third of published grades for occupational/curriculum areas, **or**
- leadership and management are judged to be less than satisfactory.

This provision will be subject to a full reinspection.

The final decision as to whether the provision is inadequate rests with the Chief Inspector of Adult Learning. A statement as to whether the provision is adequate or not is included in the summary section of the inspection report.

INSPECTION REPORT

Midland Group Training Services Limited

Contents

Summary

Description of the provider	1
Scope of provision	2
About the inspection	2
Overall judgement	2
Grades	3
Key findings	3
What learners like about Midland Group Training Services Limited	7
What learners think Midland Group Training Services Limited could improve	7
Key challenges for Midland Group Training Services Limited	8

Detailed inspection findings

Leadership and management	9
Equality of opportunity	10
Quality assurance	11
Engineering, technology & manufacturing	13

INSPECTION REPORT

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROVIDER

1. Midland Group Training Services Limited (MGTS) is a group training association with a membership of about 150 engineering companies. It is a company and registered charity overseen by a board of 12 trustees. These comprise senior executives from member companies and the chief executive of MGTS.
2. MGTS is based in a two-storey building close to the centre of Coventry. This houses various engineering workshops, a Centre of Vocational Excellence (CoVE), computer suites, teaching rooms and offices. MGTS employs 33 staff, including the chief executive, three managers, six technical trainers, 10 training advisers, and various administrative and catering staff.
3. Work-based learning for young people is funded through Coventry and Warwickshire Learning and Skills Council (LSC) and Herefordshire and Worcestershire LSC. Coventry and Warwickshire is the lead LSC. MGTS has 209 learners in engineering. Of these, 160 are advanced apprentices, 35 are apprentices, six are taking national vocational qualifications (NVQs) and eight are on an Entry to Employment (E2E) programme. The E2E programme accepts learners who wish to follow apprenticeships but who do not have the required general certificates of secondary education (GCSEs). These learners take part in shared activities with the apprentices and are given extra support until they are ready to join the apprenticeship scheme. MGTS offers apprenticeships in a range of engineering disciplines, including technical services, engineering production, engineering maintenance and engineering design. It also has a few learners on programmes in business administration and warehousing and distribution.
4. MGTS has one training centre at which most learners complete their initial off-the-job training and technical certificates. Staff from a further education college deliver the technical certificates at the MGTS training centre, and nine further colleges are involved in the programme. These colleges deliver initial training and technical certificates to the remainder of the learners.
5. As well as work-based learning for young people, MGTS provides a wide range of commercially funded training for employed adults. This includes training in management and supervisory skills, health and safety, and quality management, as well as training for staff to update their technical skills and become multi-skilled. In November 2003, MGTS became a CoVE for training in multi-skilled management of industrial electrical systems. The CoVE facilities are used to provide commercial training for employed adults. The apprentices and advanced apprentices also use some of the CoVE's facilities as part of their off-the-job training.

SCOPE OF PROVISION

Engineering, technology & manufacturing

6. There are 209 learners in work-based learning in engineering. They are working towards NVQs in performing engineering operations and other engineering qualifications at levels 2 and 3. Of the learners, 166 are employed and 43 are unemployed. One hundred and sixty are taking advanced apprenticeships, 35 are taking apprenticeships, six are taking NVQs and eight are on an E2E programme. Most apprentices complete their programme in about 10 months and most advanced apprentices complete their programme in about 48 months. Learners are recruited by member companies or by MGTS itself. MGTS tests new learners' key skills and carries out other tests to identify a suitable programme and to find out whether they need additional support. In their first year, apprentices attend the training centre full time and take a level 2 NVQ in performing engineering operations. Learners on the E2E programme take a level 1 NVQ in performing engineering operations and move on to the apprenticeship if they are successful. In their second year of training, apprentices work towards a level 3 NVQ in the workplace. Learners are assessed at the training centre in the first year. After that, they are visited at work by MGTS's qualified assessors. All learners have their progress reviewed every 12 weeks.

ABOUT THE INSPECTION

Number of inspectors	4
Number of inspection days	16
Number of learner interviews	41
Number of staff interviews	13
Number of employer interviews	13
Number of subcontractor interviews	2
Number of locations/sites/learning centres visited	16
Number of partner/external agency interviews	3

OVERALL JUDGEMENT

7. The quality of the provision is adequate to meet the reasonable needs of those receiving it. Training in engineering, technology and manufacturing is good. Leadership and management are good, and equality of opportunity and quality assurance are satisfactory.

GRADES

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		3
Quality assurance		3

Engineering, technology & manufacturing		2
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Other contributory areas		
- Work-based learning for young people	201	2
- Entry to Employment	8	None

KEY FINDINGS

Achievement and standards

8. **Retention and completion rates are satisfactory for the advanced apprenticeship programme, on which most learners are enrolled. However, they are poor for the apprenticeship programme.** Learners' written work is good. Learners develop good practical skills and produce good work in practical training sessions. The evidence in learners' portfolios is good.

9. **Some learners do not start collecting evidence for their level 3 NVQs until late in their training.** Learners complete the level 2 NVQ during their off-the-job training. They then work towards the level 3 NVQ in the workplace. Some learners who have been in the workplace for 12 months have not yet had an assessment or started to gather evidence.

10. **A good proportion of learners move on to jobs or to training at a higher level.** Learners start at E2E, apprenticeship or advanced apprenticeship level and a good proportion move on to a higher level. Most E2E learners move on to the apprenticeship programme. MGTS identifies potential employers for unemployed learners and arranges interviews. Many of these learners gain jobs. A good proportion of learners move on to advanced apprenticeships, higher vocational qualifications and engineering degrees.

Quality of education and training

Grades awarded to learning sessions

	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Total
Engineering, technology & manufacturing	0	2	2	0	0	0	0	4
Total	0	2	2	0	0	0	0	4

11. Learners receive good practical training and good training in background knowledge. Off-the-job training is good. Learning sessions are well planned and use a variety of teaching methods. In practical sessions, learners develop a good level of expertise. Training in the workplace is good and well planned. Learners take part in a wide range of suitable activities and stay in each department for a suitable time.

12. The identification of needs for additional support is satisfactory and learners receive satisfactory support with literacy and numeracy. Staff talk to learners about the results of their initial assessments and agree on the level and type of support to be given. Specialist staff provide additional support in the training centre as part of learners' off-the-job training.

13. Training resources are very good. Workshops are spacious and well maintained and classrooms in the training centre are good. MGTS has good specialist equipment that meets current industrial standards. However, there are not enough pneumatic training rigs for some groups of learners. Learners have good resources at work for developing their skills.

14. Learners' progress is monitored and recorded very effectively. Learners can refer to records of their assessments and can easily identify what they have achieved and what they still need to do. Learners' progress in the workplace is thoroughly monitored. Assessors visit the workplace every 12 weeks to carry out progress reviews. Shorter reviews are carried out every four weeks.

15. Learners and employers show very good levels of satisfaction. Learners and employers praise the training and support given by MGTS. Many of the current employers have worked with MGTS for many years. Communications with employers are good.

Leadership and management

16. Trustees and senior managers set a clear direction through effective strategic reviews and planning. A thorough strategic review was completed in December 2003 after much consultation with the LSC, member companies and partners. As part of the review, senior managers developed clear strategic goals and measures of performance. However, the various plans developed during the review are not clearly linked.

17. MGTS has good links with other organisations. It uses these to raise awareness of training opportunities in the engineering industry and to widen participation. The chief executive is involved in many groups concerned with training. MGTS has good links with its subcontractors and has been working with many of them for more than 20 years. The company works closely with Connexions and with the local education authority (LEA). It also has effective links with local schools.

18. The management of the training is satisfactory. Managers and senior managers are approachable and supportive. Staff are encouraged to question and debate decisions

taken by senior managers and challenge them if necessary.

19. Managers have not adequately monitored retention and completion rates on apprenticeship programmes. These fell steeply for learners recruited in the three years up to 2002-03. Managers were aware of the problem but management information reports did not reflect its scale.

20. MGTS has good strategies to widen participation in engineering. The company offers Saturday morning taster sessions for potential learners. It also provides an E2E programme, which allows more learners to become engineering apprentices.

21. MGTS does not adequately promote equality and diversity. Equality of opportunity is discussed at learners' inductions but diversity is not covered. Staff do not use effective questioning at progress reviews to raise learners' awareness of equality and diversity or to check their understanding. No member of staff has overall responsibility for promoting equality of opportunity. Staff have little understanding of some aspects of equality of opportunity.

22. MGTS makes good use of feedback to improve its programmes. Employers and employed learners provide yearly feedback. Learners who are based in the training centre answer three questionnaires each year. The questionnaires contain LSC 'core' questions for benchmarking purposes. The operations manager uses the feedback to improve the training programmes and to provide information for staff appraisals.

23. MGTS has thorough arrangements to assure quality. These are based on an internationally recognised quality assurance system. Managers and training staff are fully aware of the quality assurance procedures. The company arranges thorough independent audits of its quality assurance system. However, learners' retention and completion rates have not yet improved.

24. The self-assessment report and development plan are satisfactory. The self-assessment report identified many of the strengths and weaknesses identified during the inspection. However, it did not identify the poor retention and completion rates on the apprenticeship programme.

25. The use of data is satisfactory. MGTS has recently appointed a member of staff to collect information from learners' 12-weekly progress reviews and store it on a database. Regular reports are generated for managers. These concern learners' completion rates and destinations. Managers also receive information about learners who are still in training after their expected completion date. The same database is used to provide the operations manager with valuable information about learners.

26. Internal verification is satisfactory. The internal verifiers are suitably qualified. The internal verification policy is clear. The internal verifiers follow a written plan that covers all units and assessors. They produce written reports and give copies to the assessors. The requirements of the awarding body are met. Over the year, the internal verifiers sample all units of all qualifications.

Leadership and management

Strengths

- clear direction through effective strategic review and planning
- good links with other organisations
- good strategies to widen participation in engineering
- good use of feedback to achieve continuous improvement

Weaknesses

- inadequate monitoring of retention and achievement rates on apprenticeship programme
- insufficient promotion of equality and diversity

Engineering, technology & manufacturing

Other contributory areas

Strengths

- good proportion of learners moving on to further training or jobs
- good practical training and training in background knowledge
- very good training resources
- particularly effective monitoring of learners' progress
- good levels of satisfaction among learners and employers

Weaknesses

- poor retention and achievement rates for the apprenticeship programme
- late collection of evidence by some level 3 NVQ learners

WHAT LEARNERS LIKE ABOUT MIDLAND GROUP TRAINING SERVICES LIMITED:

- 'good support from training officers'
- 'good training at the centre'
- 'you learn good timekeeping'
- 'we can have our say and things do happen'
- 'it's a good stepping-stone between school and work'
- 'good regular feedback'
- 'good computers'

WHAT LEARNERS THINK MIDLAND GROUP TRAINING SERVICES LIMITED COULD IMPROVE:

- 'the organisation and the time taken to start the level 3 NVQ'
- 'the resources in the centre, especially pneumatic rigs'
- 'the space for us outside at break times'

KEY CHALLENGES FOR MIDLAND GROUP TRAINING SERVICES LIMITED:

- improve retention and achievement rates across all programmes
- ensure that the quality assurance system results in measurable improvements over time
- start NVQ at level 3 assessment at an earlier stage in the programme
- promote awareness and understanding of equality and diversity more effectively with staff, learners and employers
- develop a more coherent approach to strategic planning and self-assessment
- ensure that the main performance measures can effectively identify poor performance
- maintain the high level of satisfaction among learners, employers and partners

DETAILED INSPECTION FINDINGS

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Grade 2

Strengths

- clear direction through effective strategic review and planning
- good links with other organisations
- good strategies to widen participation in engineering
- good use of feedback to achieve continuous improvement

Weaknesses

- inadequate monitoring of retention and achievement rates on apprenticeship programme
- insufficient promotion of equality and diversity

27. Trustees and senior managers set a clear direction through effective strategic reviews and planning. A thorough strategic review was completed in December 2003 after much consultation with the LSC, member companies and partners. As part of the review, senior managers developed clear strategic goals and measures of performance. However, the various plans developed during the review are not clearly linked. For example, the aims and targets in the three-year development plan are not directly linked with the goals in the strategic action plan. Trustees from the member companies give strong support to managers through frequent and well-attended board meetings. However, the trustees are not monitoring learners' performance adequately. Although they are aware of the self-assessment report, they are not involved in self-assessment or in monitoring their own performance.

28. MGTS has good links with other organisations. It uses these to raise awareness of training opportunities in the engineering industry and to widen participation. The chief executive of MGTS works closely with the LEA and local schools and is chair of an association of training providers in Coventry and Warwickshire. MGTS has good links with the subcontracted colleges, many of which have been working with the company for more than 20 years. MGTS has a particularly good relationship with the college of further education that provides training towards technical certificates in the training centre. The company works closely with Connexions and with the LEA. It also has effective links with local schools. For example, it provides work experience and young apprenticeships.

29. The management of the training is satisfactory. Managers and senior managers are approachable and supportive. Staff are encouraged to question and debate decisions taken by senior managers and challenge them if necessary. The staff who provide work-based learning benefit from being involved in commercial training and CoVE activities. The training advisers meet individually with their managers every three months to agree

targets relating to learners. These are linked to targets agreed with the local LSC.

30. Managers have not adequately monitored retention and completion rates on apprenticeship programmes. These fell steeply for learners recruited in the three years up to 2002-03. Although managers were aware of the problem, management information reports did not reflect its scale. This important weakness was not clearly identified during self-assessment. MGTS has introduced various strategies to improve retention rates on this programme, but it is too soon to judge their effect. Managers are making further efforts to find out why learners are leaving early.

31. MGTS arranges satisfactory support for learners who need to improve their literacy and numeracy skills. The company uses a computer program to identify needs for support and has introduced suitable learning materials. A local college provides suitable support, including support for learners with dyslexia. Learners' progress is monitored to provide valuable information for staff and learners.

32. MGTS manages its accommodation and other resources well. Specialist resources in the training centre are very good. Classrooms are clean, tidy and well lit, and contain relevant displays. Workshops are spacious and well maintained. Specialist equipment reflects current industrial standards. Assessors and training staff are well qualified and have experience of the engineering industry. MGTS employs sufficient trainers, assessors and internal verifiers.

Equality of opportunity

Contributory grade 3

33. MGTS has good strategies to widen participation in engineering. It offers Saturday morning taster sessions for prospective learners. It also provides an E2E programme, which allows more learners to become engineering apprentices. The company analyses data on the ethnicity, gender and disabilities of applicants. Managers use the information to identify and target groups that are under-represented in training. In the past two years, MGTS has increased the proportion of learners from minority ethnic groups. Staff visits local schools regularly to talk about engineering, carry out practice interviews and take part in role-play. Staff also provide useful briefings for new Connexions advisers.

34. MGTS has disability and equal opportunities policies and a plan for implementing them. These were updated in March 2004 and take into account recent legislation. The chief executive has overall responsibility for implementing the policies. The policies are communicated to all learners and staff. MGTS has a suitable anti-harassment and bullying policy, which is explained to all learners at induction. Learners are aware of the grievance procedure. MGTS has satisfactory arrangements to deal with complaints. Learners' concerns and complaints are clearly recorded.

35. MGTS commissioned an independent review of access to its premises in June 2003. Since the review, it has provided parking spaces for disabled people, ramps to the front entrance and automatic doors to the main reception. A lift operates between the ground and first floor, and the training rooms are accessible to people using wheelchairs. Some of the actions recommended by the review have not yet been carried out. MGTS does

not provide special resources for people with visual or hearing impairments.

36. MGTS does not adequately promote equality and diversity. This weakness is recognised in the self-assessment report. Equality of opportunity is discussed at learners' inductions, but diversity is not covered. Staff have recently been given training in equality of opportunity but this did not cover the promotion of diversity. There is no member of staff with overall responsibility for promoting equality of opportunity. Staff have little understanding of some aspects of equality of opportunity. The questions asked at learners' progress reviews are not effective in raising their awareness or checking their understanding of equality and diversity. MGTS is testing new progress review paperwork that prompts staff to ask a range of questions on equality of opportunity.

Quality assurance

Contributory grade 3

37. MGTS makes good use of feedback to improve its programmes. Employers and employed learners provide yearly feedback. Learners who are based in the training centre answer three questionnaires each year containing questions set by the LSC. The operations manager uses the feedback to improve the training programmes and to guide staff appraisals. Learners value the opportunity to give feedback and feel that they can influence the organisation. Changes were made to off-the-job training after analysis of learners' feedback.

38. MGTS has thorough arrangements to assure quality. These are based on an internationally recognised quality assurance system. The company has thorough procedures to assure the quality of all the main stages of training. Managers and training staff are fully aware of the quality assurance procedures. The company arranges through independent audits of its quality assurance system. However, learners' retention and completion rates have not yet improved. MGTS has a system for observing its own training sessions and trainers are given helpful feedback. It also observes the training sessions provided by one subcontracted college and gives useful feedback to the trainers. However, it has no system for using independent evaluations of its subcontractors' performance during the yearly reviews of their service level agreements.

39. The self-assessment report and development plan are satisfactory. The self-assessment report identified many of the strengths and weaknesses identified during the inspection. However, it did not clearly identify the poor retention and completion rates on the apprenticeship programme. Staff, learners and employers are involved in self-assessment. Staff are aware of the three-year development plan. However, the development plan is not clearly linked to the self-assessment report.

40. MGTS makes satisfactory use of data. It has recently appointed a member of staff to collect information from learners' 12-weekly progress reviews and store it on a database. Regular reports are generated for managers. These concern learners' completion rates and destinations. Managers also receive information about learners who are still in training after their expected completion date. The same database is used to provide the operations manager with valuable information about learners. Colour coding is used effectively to identify learners whose attendance or performance is poor. Information is

MIDLAND GROUP TRAINING SERVICES LIMITED

also generated about each learner's completion of units and this is used effectively to monitor progress. The company has a useful system that trainers can use to monitor learners' progress with key skills.

41. Internal verification is satisfactory. The internal verifiers are suitably qualified. The internal verification policy is clear and the internal verifiers follow a written plan which covers all units and assessors. The internal verifiers produce written reports and give copies to the appropriate assessors. The awarding body's requirements are met. Over the year, the internal verifiers sample all units of all qualifications.

42. The monitoring of health and safety at learners' work placements is satisfactory. Staff from MGTS visit new employers to audit health and safety at their premises and to review their insurance policies. Employers are put into risk bands. High-risk employers are visited once every three months and low-risk employers are visited once each year. MGTS has work-placement agreements with all employers.

AREAS OF LEARNING

Engineering, technology & manufacturing

Engineering, technology & manufacturing		2
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Other contributory areas		
- Work-based learning for young people	201	2
- Entry to Employment	8	None

Other contributory areas

Strengths

- good proportion of learners moving on to further training or jobs
- good practical training and training in background knowledge
- very good training resources
- particularly effective monitoring of learners' progress
- good levels of satisfaction among learners and employers

Weaknesses

- poor retention and achievement rates for the apprenticeship programme
- late collection of evidence by some level 3 NVQ learners

Achievement and standards

43. Retention and completion rates are satisfactory for the advanced apprenticeship programme, on which most learners are enrolled. However, they are poor for the apprenticeship programme. In the three years up to 2002-03, retention rates on the apprenticeship programme fell from 83 per cent to 22 per cent. Over the same period, the completion rate fell from 58 per cent to zero. Managers have recognised this weakness and developed strategies to improve retention and completion rates. These have not yet been fully introduced and it is too soon to judge their effectiveness. Learners' written work and portfolio evidence is good. Learners develop good practical skills and produce good work in practical training sessions.

44. Some learners do not start collecting evidence for their level 3 NVQs until late in their training. Learners complete the level 2 NVQ during their off-the-job training and then work towards the level 3 NVQ in the workplace. Some learners have been in the workplace for 12 months and have not yet had an assessment or started to gather evidence. Some learners do not have their first assessment until the final year of their programme. This approach is intended by assessors and complies with the awarding body's guidelines. However, learners are missing opportunities to gather evidence. Some have to repeat earlier tasks to gather evidence. Employers are slow to decide on a

MIDLAND GROUP TRAINING SERVICES LIMITED

specialism for a few learners. These learners do not choose their optional NVQ units until late in their training. This weakness is recognised in the self-assessment report. Training staff are now working with employers to decide on learners' optional units earlier in their programmes.

45. A good proportion of learners move on to jobs or to training at a higher level. Learners start at E2E, apprenticeship or advanced apprenticeship level and a good proportion move on to a higher level. Learners who do not meet the entry requirements for an apprenticeship start on the E2E programme and work towards a level 1 NVQ in performing engineering operations. On achieving this qualification, they transfer to the apprenticeship programme. MGTS identifies potential employers for unemployed learners and arranges interviews. Many of these learners gain jobs. A good proportion of learners move on to advanced apprenticeships, higher vocational qualifications and engineering degrees. Some former apprentices are now managers with member companies and some are responsible for training.

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

LSC funded work-based learning																
Advanced apprenticeships	2004-05		2003-04		2002-03		2001-02		2000-01		1999-2000		1998-99			
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
	Number of starts	40		56		66		68		70		69		34		
Retained*	0		0		1		14		40	57	43	62	24	71		
Successfully completed	0		0		3		10		31	44	27	39	14	41		
Still in learning	39		46		37		38		0	0	0	0	0	0		

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

LSC funded work-based learning																
Apprenticeships	2004-05		2003-04		2002-03		2001-02		2000-01		1999-2000					
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
	Number of starts	41		31		18		24		12		16				
Retained*	0		18		4	22	13	54	10	83	6	38				
Successfully completed	0		18		0	0	8	33	7	58	0	0				
Still in learning	30		5		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0				

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

LSC funded work-based learning																
NVQ Training																
	2004-05		2003-04		2002-03		2001-02		2000-01		1999-2000		1998-99			
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number of starts	1		5		2		6		4		1		1			
Retained*	0		1	20	2	100	5	83	2	50	1	100	0	0		
Successfully completed	0		0	0	1	50	4	67	1	25	0	0	0	0		
Still in learning	1		5	100	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		

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

LSC funded work-based learning																
Entry to Employment																
	2004-05		2003-04													
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number of starts	12		16													
Progression ¹	3		15	94												
Achieved objectives ²	0		15	94												
Still in learning	8		0	0												

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

46. Learners receive good practical training and good training in background knowledge. Off-the-job training is good. Learning sessions are well planned and use a wide variety of teaching methods. The aims of each learning session are clearly explained to learners. Staff use good session plans. Information and learning technology is used effectively to promote learning. Teaching and learning materials are relevant and well prepared. Good use is made of visual aids. The teaching of background knowledge is linked to its practical applications. In practical learning sessions, learners are confident in approaching their trainers for help or advice. Trainers respond helpfully to learners' requests and questions. Learners have enough time to practise their skills and develop expertise. Training in the workplace is good and well planned. Learners are involved in a wide range of suitable activities and spend a suitable amount of time in each department. Mentors and supervisors provide good support. Many mentors have completed an NVQ and have a good understanding of the NVQ requirements and the structure of learners' programmes.

47. The identification of needs for additional support is satisfactory and learners receive satisfactory support with literacy and numeracy. Staff discuss with learners the results of their initial assessment and agree on the level and type of support to be given. Additional support is provided in the training centre by specialist staff as part of learners' off-the-job training. Learners on the E2E programme share many activities with apprentices and are

given additional support. A very high proportion of E2E learners transfer to the apprenticeship programme after a few months.

48. Training resources are very good. Specialist resources in the training centre are very good. Classrooms are clean, tidy, well lit and contain relevant displays. Workshops are spacious and well maintained. Specialist equipment reflects current industrial standards. However, there are insufficient pneumatic training rigs for some groups of learners. Learners have good resources in the workplace to develop their skills. Employers' equipment and practices vary greatly. Some learners are working with automated equipment, while others are specialising in traditional hand skills. However, all learners receive good on-the-job training. Assessors and training staff are well qualified and have experience of the engineering industry. MGTS employs sufficient trainers, assessors and internal verifiers.

49. Learners' progress is monitored and recorded very effectively. The results of assessments in the training centre are thoroughly recorded. Learners can refer to this information and can quickly identify what they have achieved and what they still need to do. Learners' progress at work is also effectively monitored. Learners assess themselves against agreed criteria. Assessors visit learners at work every 12 weeks to review their progress. Shorter reviews are carried out every four weeks. Progress reviews are used effectively to plan learners' activities. Previous targets are reviewed and new targets set. Employers are involved in this process. Learners and employers understand what has been achieved and what still needs to be done.

50. Assessment and internal verification are satisfactory and meet the awarding body's requirements. MGTS employs sufficient assessors and internal verifiers. Learners are assessed frequently in the workplace. Employers and learners are encouraged to contact assessors at any time. Assessors respond quickly and deal with any problems quickly and effectively. NVQ assessments are thorough and are well recorded. However, some learners do not start to collect evidence towards their level 3 NVQs in the workplace until late in their programmes. The assessors and internal verifiers are suitably qualified. The assessors hold planned meetings to ensure that they are working consistently.

51. Learners and employers show good levels of satisfaction. They praise the training and support given by MGTS. Communications with employers are good. Some employers use MGTS's programmes in preference to their own training schemes. Others have transferred from other training providers to MGTS. Many employers have worked with MGTS for many years and remain very satisfied with its services.

Leadership and management

52. The management of engineering training is satisfactory. Managers review the programmes regularly and identify areas where they need to improve. For example, they have identified the low rates of completion of apprenticeships and the weak reinforcement of equal opportunities. Managers have acted to put right weaknesses but it is too soon to judge the effect. Communications among managers and staff are good and staff understand their roles and responsibilities. Some staff do not use data to

monitor performance and set targets. The poor retention and completion rates of apprentices were not identified as an important weakness in the self-assessment report.

53. Equality of opportunity is covered at learners' inductions but is not adequately reinforced at progress reviews. The paperwork used for progress reviews includes a prompt to discuss equality of opportunity. However, the company carries out no checks to ensure that the topic is discussed. Some training advisers do not cover the topic thoroughly. The discussion does not cover all aspects of equality and diversity. Learners are not asked their views and some training advisers ask closed questions or suggest answers. Managers have recognised this weakness and have produced a new document for use in progress reviews which puts more emphasis on equality of opportunity. This document is currently being tested but it is too soon to judge its effect.