

REINSPECTION REPORT

Seleta Training and Personnel Services Ltd Reinspection

09 June 2005



ADULT LEARNING
INSPECTORATE

Grading

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

- *grade 1 - outstanding*
- *grade 2 - good*
- *grade 3 - satisfactory*
- *grade 4 - inadequate*

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.*

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

Seleta Training and Personnel Services Ltd Reinspection

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REINSPECTION REPORT

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROVIDER

1. Seleta Training and Personnel Services Ltd (Seleta TPS Ltd) was established in 1968 as the South East London Training Group. The provider changed its name to Seleta TPS Ltd in 1989 to reflect the wider range of provision that it now offers. Seleta TPS Ltd operates from two sites. Blackheath is the head office where support for services and engineering training is administered. The Croydon site delivers direct training to a broad range of young people from diverse social and ethnic backgrounds. Training delivered at the Croydon site consists predominantly of information technology (IT)-based subjects and also includes people skills training to reflect the social issues presented by the learner group. The programmes range from a foundation Entry to Employment (E2E) programme to national vocational qualifications (NVQs) at level 2 and advanced IT.

2. Seleta TPS Ltd works with outside agencies to recruit and support its learners. It offers mentoring and individual tuition to resolve issues concerning learning and physical needs and disabilities.

3. The provider has a managing director, one director and two senior operation managers, one based at each site. Following the recent staff restructuring there are three programme co-ordinators, two based at Croydon and one at Blackheath. Collectively, there are 20 members of staff. Seleta TPS Ltd holds work-based learning contracts with the London South Learning Skills Council (LSC).

SCOPE OF PROVISION

Engineering, technology & manufacturing

4. Twenty-eight learners are on engineering training programmes. Twelve are on the mechanical engineering programme, 14 are taking electrical engineering, and there are two manufacturing engineers. Twenty advanced apprentices are following a level 3 NVQ in engineering maintenance, production, manufacturing or electronics. They attend one of five colleges on day-release for background knowledge training and to study for further engineering qualifications. Most apprentices go to one college for 18 weeks to take a level 2 NVQ in performing engineering operations before starting their programmes. Eight learners are working towards an NVQ at level 3, which does not involve off-the-job training. All the learners are employed. Learners are recruited through Connexions, referred by their employers, or apply directly as a result of advertisements. On-the-job training is carried out at the employers' premises, and qualified assessors from Seleta TPS Ltd assess learners in the workplace, although two employers have qualified assessors of their own. Learners' progress reviews are carried out every eight weeks either in the workplace or at the Blackheath training centre by Seleta TPS Ltd's staff.

Business administration, management & professional

5. This area of learning was not inspected and graded during the previous inspection as the number of learners was low. There are now 10 learners on the NVQ programme and one apprentice. The apprentice and one NVQ learner are based with external employers. The remaining learners are based at the Croydon site and carry out work-experience employment in the provider's administration department. Employed learners are assessed in the workplace and receive on-the-job training. Referrals are made from Connexions, a range of youth support groups or learners apply independently. Some learners have progressed to the business administration programme from the provider's E2E programme. Learners can join the programme at any time. Subject to an interview, they are recruited to an induction programme that includes initial assessment and guidance. Apprentices work towards the NVQ at level 2 in business administration and key skills. They also have the opportunity to work towards an examination-based qualification in IT.

Information & communications technology

6. Seleta TPS Ltd offers information and communications technology (ICT) training courses for young people at its training centre in Croydon. There are 32 learners, 3 per cent of whom are women. All learners follow a work-based learning computer engineering course, and attend the training centre for up to three days each week over a period of 14 months. They receive training in key skills and in the use of computer hardware and software, working towards an NVQ at level 2 in performing engineering operations. Learners carry out additional study and project work for up to two days each week. Many learners apply directly for courses, and some are referred through Connexions, schools and other agencies. New courses are sometimes advertised in ethnic community group and free local newspapers to attract a broad range of potential learners. Following an initial interview, learners are recruited to an induction programme that includes initial assessment and guidance.

Foundation programmes

7. The provider has enrolled 18 learners on the E2E programme since August 2004. Thirteen remain on programme. In 2003-04 there were 37 learners on this programme. Learners are referred from Connexions or apply independently. New learners spend a minimum of 12 hours' training in the centre, rising to 21 hours each week, as they become accustomed to the programme, and between nine and 15 hours on directed learning or project work. Learners receive vocational training in either business administration or computer engineering. E2E learners on the business administration course have the opportunity of a work placement in-house at the training centre, but no work placements are available for other learners on the programme. Learners can join the E2E programme at any time.

ABOUT THE REINSPECTION

Number of inspectors	5
Number of inspection days	15
Number of learners interviewed	18
Number of staff interviewed	17
Number of employers interviewed	6
Number of locations/sites/learning centres visited	7

OVERALL JUDGEMENT

8. The previous inspection in June 2004 found that the provision for engineering, technology and manufacturing and for foundation programmes was unsatisfactory. Leadership and management and quality assurance arrangements were also unsatisfactory. ICT provision was satisfactory. Equality of opportunity arrangements were satisfactory. At the end of the reinspection process, the foundation provision was found to be outstanding and all other areas were good.

GRADES

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

Grades awarded at previous inspection

Leadership and management		4
Contributory grades:		
Equality of opportunity		3
Quality assurance		4

Engineering, technology & manufacturing			4
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade	
<i>Mechanical engineering</i>			
- Apprenticeships for young people	24	4	
<i>Electrical engineering</i>			
- Apprenticeships for young people	8	4	
<i>Manufacturing</i>			
- Apprenticeships for young people	4	None	

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Information & communications technology		3
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
<i>Developing IT systems</i> - Apprenticeships for young people	31	4
<i>Using IT</i> - Other government-funded provision	49	2

Foundation programmes		4
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
<i>Employability/employment training</i> - Entry to Employment	26	4

Grades awarded at reinspection

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

Engineering, technology & manufacturing		2
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
<i>Mechanical engineering</i> - Apprenticeships for young people	12	2
<i>Electrical engineering</i> - Apprenticeships for young people	14	2
<i>Manufacturing</i> - Apprenticeships for young people	2	None

Business administration, management & professional		2
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
<i>Business administration</i> - NVQ training for young people - Apprenticeships for young people	10 1	2 None

Information & communications technology		2
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Developing IT systems - NVQ training for young people	32	2

Foundation programmes		1
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Employability/employment training - Entry to Employment	13	1

KEY FINDINGS

Achievement and standards

9. **Learners in business administration, ICT and E2E achieve well.** Business administration NVQ learners' achievements have improved significantly from 48 per cent in 2001-02 to 100 per cent in 2003-04. Opportunities to gain additional qualifications are good and four learners have achieved an examination-based qualification in IT. E2E learners have a good range of achievements, including certificates in literacy and numeracy, ICT and modules towards NVQs. They develop self-confidence as well as improved skills in many aspects of their personal lives, which is clearly recognised and recorded. Many of the E2E learners progress to level 2 NVQ programmes with the provider.

10. Achievement and retention rates for ICT learners have also improved. Learners' knowledge of software packages is good. Portfolios are well presented and contain clear evidence of learners' progression and achievements.

11. **Learners in engineering develop good vocational skills** through effective work-based supervision and training. They carry out increasingly complex tasks without supervision. **Significant improvements have been made in NVQ achievements by engineering learners over the past year.** Seven learners have now achieved their NVQ and more recently enrolled learners are showing good progress and are achieving NVQ units.

12. All learners make good progress in developing their personal skills. They gain increased confidence and self-esteem.

Quality of education and training

Grades awarded to learning sessions

	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Total
Business administration, management & professional	0	1	1	0	2
Information & communications technology	0	3	0	0	3
Foundation programmes	1	5	0	0	6
Total	1	9	1	0	11

13. Off-the-job training is very good in E2E and ICT. All teaching sessions were good or better. Learning is often practical and learners are very well motivated. Relationships between tutors and learners are very good. Individual tuition is very effective in providing extra literacy and numeracy support.

14. Resources are good. The training centre and teaching rooms at the Croydon site are well maintained, inviting and well stocked with computers and other technical teaching aids such as interactive whiteboards. High-specification computers which use industry standard software are available for ICT learners. All learners at the Croydon site have access to an open-learning room to enable them to complete their work independently. Engineering learners have good-quality work placements.

15. Assessments and reviews are particularly good for E2E and business administration learners. Thorough initial assessments provide a clear basis on which to plan support for learners' individual needs, including literacy and numeracy skills. All E2E learners have weekly reviews which include thorough checks on personal development targets, as well as training targets.

16. Support for learners is very good overall. Many learners based at the Croydon site have identified additional learning difficulties and significant social support needs. Staff provide concentrated effective support for all learners to assist them in overcoming obstacles to learning.

17. Assessors and employers provide good support for engineering learners. Supervisors and skilled technicians are very supportive and share their knowledge and expertise with learners. Assessors provide additional help and support for those learners who require it, such as individual tuition for key skills.

18. Insufficient on-the-job training opportunities are provided for business administration, ICT and E2E learners. Good use is made of the Croydon site's administration department for in-house work experience, but not enough opportunities are created for learners to experience work with other local employers.

19. Documents for engineering and business administration learners are not completed thoroughly enough. Some records are not dated or signed. Engineering learners are sometimes not set sufficiently specific targets.

20. **The E2E programme is restricted in range.** The provider has concentrated on improving the overall programme content and delivery and has plans to increase the range of occupational tasters. However, the programme currently offers only business administration and ICT. Some learners have expressed an interest in trying out more vocational areas.

Leadership and management

21. **Seleta TPS Ltd makes good use of management information** and has developed a computerised management information system that clearly meets the specific needs of its organisation. The system enables tutors and management to check learners' overall achievements immediately online.

22. **Staff development continues to be good.** The provider operates a thorough formal appraisal system which is clearly linked to the current quality objectives for staff development. An overall learning plan for 2005-06 details the provider's training requirements.

23. **Particularly good resources help with the learning process.** A range of well-equipped teaching rooms meets the needs of large and small groups. All areas of the Croydon and Blackheath sites are well maintained. The wide range of work placements for engineering learners is a very valuable resource and provides learners with appropriate, good-quality industrial placements.

24. **Seleta TPS Ltd actively encourages enrolment of young people from under-represented groups.** It promotes all of its programmes through a range of activities, such as visiting schools and colleges, and meetings with probation services, the police, and the youth offending team. It advertises in media that is aimed at minority ethnic readers. A high percentage of learners are from minority ethnic backgrounds.

25. **Seleta TPS Ltd provides very good levels of support** that enable learners to overcome the obstacles to learning that many of them experience. Personal support for E2E learners is excellent. They have developed very effective links with local counselling agencies and an educational psychologist visits the Croydon site regularly. Learners acknowledge these support arrangements and comment on them in their written feedback questionnaires.

26. **The provider has an active and strong commitment to continuous quality improvement.** It is self-critical in its approach to quality assurance arrangements and acted quickly on the weaknesses identified in its previous inspection report. Procedures now exist to check the quality of all aspects of the learners' experience. Programme co-ordinators place a strong emphasis on ensuring the quality of their programmes through regular programme reviews and improvement meetings.

27. **The provider does not have sufficient external work-experience placements for learners on the E2E, administration and ICT programmes.** Seleta TPS Ltd has

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acknowledged this situation and plans are under way to arrange such placements for these learners.

28. Seleta TPS Ltd has improved links with employers and has records of their equality of opportunity policies. **There is still insufficient ongoing monitoring of employers' understanding and implementation of equality of opportunity and diversity policies.**

29. **The training that takes place with employers is not monitored sufficiently by the provider.** This affects mainly the engineering learners. There are no formal arrangements to ensure the quality of the training that learners are receiving on the job.

30. The self-assessment process is now more effective. All staff are involved in discussions, and learners' views are gathered, analysed and used in the process. Employers are not involved sufficiently. Inspectors' findings matched most of the self-assessment judgements, but identified further strengths and weaknesses.

31. Internal verification is satisfactory overall. Some inconsistencies have occurred in the internal verification documents for business administration but the provider had not identified this situation.

Leadership and management

Strengths

- very effective use of management information
- good staff development
- particularly good resources
- good focus on promoting training to under-represented groups
- very good levels of support for learners
- strong and active commitment to continuous quality improvement

Weaknesses

- insufficient external work experience for some learners
- insufficient monitoring of equal opportunities with employers
- insufficient monitoring of training provided by employers

Engineering, technology & manufacturing

Mechanical engineering

Strengths

- good achievement of practical skills
- significant improvement in NVQ achievements
- very good learner support
- very effective monitoring of learners' progress

Weaknesses

- inconsistent key skills provision
- insufficiently thorough progress reviews

Electrical engineering

Strengths

- good achievement of practical skills
- significant improvement in NVQ achievements
- good learner support
- very effective monitoring of learners' progress

Weaknesses

- inconsistent key skills provision
- insufficiently thorough progress reviews

Manufacturing

Strengths

- good achievement of practical skills
- significant improvement in NVQ achievements
- good learner support
- very effective monitoring of learners' progress

Weaknesses

- inconsistent key skills provision
- insufficiently thorough progress reviews

Business administration, management & professional

Business administration

Strengths

- good achievement rate
- well-managed assessments and progress reviews
- good resources
- very good pastoral and learning support
- good programme management

Weaknesses

- insufficient work placements
- inconsistent record-keeping

Information & communications technology

Developing IT systems

Strengths

- good achievement rate
- very good teaching
- very effective use of resources to support learning
- good pastoral and learning support

Weaknesses

- insufficient opportunities for on-the-job training

Foundation programmes

Employability/employment training

Strengths

- good achievement rate
- very good standards of teaching and learning
- good use of resources
- extremely effective assessments and progress reviews
- excellent personal support for learners
- good programme management

Weaknesses

- narrow range of programmes

DETAILED REINSPECTION FINDING

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Grade 2

Strengths

- very effective use of management information
- good staff development
- particularly good resources
- good focus on promoting training to under-represented groups
- very good levels of support for learners
- strong and active commitment to continuous quality improvement

Weaknesses

- insufficient external work experience for some learners
- insufficient monitoring of equal opportunities with employers
- insufficient monitoring of training provided by employers

32. Seleta TPS Ltd makes very effective use of management information. Since the previous inspection, it has developed a computerised management information system that clearly meets the specific needs of the provider. All staff use this system to record information about learners at the beginning of their programmes. A comprehensive individual learning plan is produced for all learners. All information relating to learners' units of training is recorded. Progress review forms automatically indicate where target unit completion dates have been missed. These forms help the tutor and the learner to focus on missed targets as a priority. A section of the management information system collates an overview of learners' achievements together with completion dates. All tutors have been issued with laptop computers with remote access to the database. They use these during reviews to check on the status of unit completion. This system has been developed in response to staff requests. Further refinements of the system are currently being developed.

33. Staff development continues to be good. Since the previous inspection, Seleta TPS Ltd has improved the recording of staff appraisals and continues to operate a thorough formal appraisal system. The process is clearly linked to the quality objective for staff development. Records contain comprehensive details of training needs, with clear objectives and priority ratings. An overall learning plan for 2005-06 details the provider's training requirements. A range of training has taken place over the past year, including various training courses relating to E2E provision. Planned training includes training the trainer, assessor qualifications and transforming teaching, equal opportunities, and literacy and numeracy teaching qualifications.

34. Particularly good resources help with the learning process. At the Croydon site, good use is made of whiteboards in teaching rooms. A range of teaching rooms of

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various sizes is used to meet the needs of large and small groups. All teaching rooms have closed-circuit television coverage and panic bars. The Croydon site is very well supplied with computers. Learners have access to one of the larger computer rooms for self-study, which they use well. All areas of the Croydon and Blackheath sites are well maintained. Learners have their own rest room at the Croydon site which is well decorated and provides kitchen facilities. A range of helpful posters and helpline numbers is available on a noticeboard and learners' achievements are acknowledged and displayed on the wall. The wide range of work placements for engineering learners based at the Blackheath site is a very valuable resource and provides learners with appropriate and good-quality industrial placements.

35. Formal communications have improved since the previous inspection. A range of meetings now takes place, including board, management and programme reviews. All are formally recorded, with action points for designated members of staff. Strategic planning and development is thorough. The business plan for 2005-06 contains clear targets and is linked to a comprehensive three-year development plan.

36. The provision for the identification and support of learners' literacy and numeracy needs is satisfactory. All learners have their literacy and numeracy skills assessed and, where necessary, appropriate support is provided to enable learners to cope with their training programmes. Good arrangements exist for ongoing support when learners progress to more advanced programmes, for example from E2E to NVQs at level 2.

37. There are insufficient external work placements for learners on the E2E, business administration and ICT programmes. None of the current E2E learners are on external work placements and only two learners on the administration programme are placed with outside employers. Seleta TPS Ltd does, however, use its Croydon site for structured work experience, with most business administration learners and a few E2E learners carrying out real administration duties in the main office. Although this is a very useful resource as an initial stage for learners to practise their skills and improve their confidence, it restricts the learners' experiences to what and who they already know. The ICT programme does not require learners to have work experience, but they do not have sufficient opportunities to experience real work situations. The provider has acknowledged this problem.

Equality of opportunity

Contributory grade 2

38. Seleta TPS Ltd actively encourages young people from under-represented groups to enrol. It promotes all its programmes through a range of activities, such as visiting schools and colleges, and meetings with probation services and the police, as well as advertising its training programmes in media aimed at minority ethnic readers. Management also has regular contact and meetings with the youth offending team. Equal opportunities reports are produced regularly and they respond to priority targets from the London South LSC area review. Of the current learners based at the Croydon site, approximately 80 per cent are from minority ethnic backgrounds, and 25 per cent of all engineering learners are from minority ethnic backgrounds. There is currently only one female learner on the engineering programme, but Seleta TPS Ltd is planning to

attract more women into this area of learning. All the learners on the E2E programme have identified additional learning and/or social needs. Most learners on ICT programmes also have either learning or social needs, and just over 50 per cent of the administration learners have such needs. Over 30 per cent of the provider's staff are representative of minority ethnic backgrounds and 5 per cent have disabilities.

39. Most of Seleta TPS Ltd's learners have complex social needs and learning difficulties. Seleta TPS Ltd provides very good levels of support that enable learners to overcome the obstacles to learning that many of them experience. For example, learners know that they can ask for help and support whether their problems involve family issues, housing, medical or law enforcement matters. Sometimes the support given is simply listening to learners' problems, at other times it is more focused on practical assistance. For example, Seleta TPS Ltd has good links with two local counselling agencies and refer learners when appropriate. An educational psychologist visits the Croydon site regularly to hold pre-arranged meetings with those learners who Seleta TPS Ltd feels would benefit from this intervention. Arrangements for flexible attendance are made for some learners when appropriate. Learners acknowledge these support arrangements and comment on them in their written feedback questionnaires.

40. The Croydon site is accessible to wheelchair users, and has lift access to the first-floor training rooms. The training accommodation has a hearing loop. The provider is prepared to purchase specialist aids and adaptations if learners require them. Seleta TPS Ltd has recently appointed an appropriately experienced and qualified member of staff to provide support for learners with dyslexia and those with specific learning difficulties.

41. The provider has a comprehensive and up-to-date equal opportunities policy and a clearly written statement on disabilities. All learners receive a copy during induction. Issues relating to equality of opportunity are checked with learners during each progress review. Learners understand anti-bullying and anti-harassment procedures and know how to make complaints. Complaints and incidents are dealt with satisfactorily and information, actions and outcomes are recorded. However, these records are not centrally located.

42. Some staff training and development has been provided for equality of opportunity, and training is scheduled to take place in the near future for an update of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995. The provider collects data about learners' gender, ethnic background and disability status, and sets challenging targets for the recruitment of learners from under-represented groups. However, Seleta TPS Ltd does not use its data about learners to monitor and analyse their retention and achievement rates according to gender, ethnic background and disability status.

43. Since the previous inspection, Seleta TPS Ltd has obtained equal opportunities policies from all its employers. However, employers are not monitored sufficiently on equality of opportunity and diversity, or their understanding of these matters.

Quality assurance

Contributory grade 2

44. Seleta TPS Ltd has an active and strong commitment to continuous quality improvement. It is self-critical in its approach to quality assurance arrangements and acted quickly on the weaknesses identified in previous inspection reports. Procedures now exist to check the quality of all aspects of the learners' experiences. A full series of flow charts indicates procedures for staff to follow for each part of the training process, such as initial assessments and completion of individual learning plans. An annual audit schedule for the Blackheath and Croydon sites has been implemented and is up to date. Company policies and procedures are reviewed and updated as necessary. The provider constantly reviews its performance against measurable targets and continuously challenges itself to improve through its three-year development plan and regular meetings such as programme improvement meetings. Quality improvement objectives have been implemented for all areas of training provision. These objectives are linked to all programme areas and other activities such as staff development and training.

45. All staff demonstrate a strong commitment to quality improvement and feel well supported by management to suggest ways in which to improve. Since the previous inspection, staff restructuring has involved designating members of staff as programme co-ordinators for all programmes. These co-ordinators have a strong influence on ensuring the quality of their programmes, through regular programme reviews and improvement meetings. Minutes are well recorded with clear targets and actions.

46. Arrangements for staff observations are satisfactory. The provider has an annual plan for all assessors and trainers to be observed. They receive feedback about their performances, which is linked to a comprehensive appraisal process. Internal verification procedures in all programme areas are satisfactory.

47. Questionnaires are used to obtain the views of learners at regular intervals during their training. Useful analyses are produced and an overview of the feedback is communicated to all staff. Tutors also seek feedback from individual training sessions. Employers' views are now sought. The provider was disappointed with a return of 40 per cent from a questionnaire sent out to employers, and is seeking to increase this figure.

48. Self-assessment is now more thorough. All staff are involved in the process, mainly through discussions during the scheduled improvement meetings. Learners' views have been analysed and have contributed to the process. However, employers are not sufficiently involved in the self-assessment process. The most recent self-assessment report was produced in May 2005 and is clearly structured around the Common Inspection Framework. Inspectors' findings matched most of the conclusions of the self-assessment report, but identified further strengths and weaknesses. The provider underestimated the standard of provision in the areas of learning and leadership and management.

49. The training provided by employers is not monitored sufficiently. This affects mainly the engineering learners. No formal arrangements exist to ensure the quality of the training that learners are receiving on the job.

AREAS OF LEARNING

Engineering, technology & manufacturing

Engineering, technology & manufacturing		2
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
<i>Mechanical engineering</i> - Apprenticeships for young people	12	2
<i>Electrical engineering</i> - Apprenticeships for young people	14	2
<i>Manufacturing</i> - Apprenticeships for young people	2	None

Mechanical engineering

Strengths

- good achievement of practical skills
- significant improvement in NVQ achievements
- very good learner support
- very effective monitoring of learners' progress

Weaknesses

- inconsistent key skills provision
- insufficiently thorough progress reviews

Electrical engineering

Strengths

- good achievement of practical skills
- significant improvement in NVQ achievements
- good learner support
- very effective monitoring of learners' progress

Weaknesses

- inconsistent key skills provision
- insufficiently thorough progress reviews

Manufacturing

Strengths

- good achievement of practical skills
- significant improvement in NVQ achievements
- good learner support
- very effective monitoring of learners' progress

Weaknesses

- inconsistent key skills provision
- insufficiently thorough progress reviews

Achievement and standards

50. As identified in the self-assessment report, learners develop very good practical skills through effective work-based supervision and training. This training is carried out with individuals in the workplace by experienced supervisors and fitters. Learners are employed in a wide range of workplaces, including a national bakery, hospitals, and lift maintenance companies. They are often mentored by workplace supervisors or experienced technicians. The provider works with companies to ensure that the training offered to learners meets Seleta TPS Ltd's requirements and also provides appropriate experience for NVQ assessments. Learners are actively encouraged to build on their skills and they carry out increasingly complex tasks without supervision. Some learners have been promoted or moved to design departments before completing their NVQ programmes. A few learners will complete a higher-level qualification which is beyond framework requirements.

51. In the past year, very significant improvements have been made in achievements of NVQs by advanced apprentices. Of the 20 learners on advanced apprenticeships, seven have completed their NVQ. These learners had achieved no NVQ units at the time of the previous inspection. The remaining learners are more recent starters and are showing good progress with their NVQ units. Since the previous inspection, four new learners have begun programmes and remain in training. Learners' achievements are acknowledged by presentations of certificates within the companies.

Quality of education and training

52. The provider's excellent management information system is now used very effectively to monitor learners' progress. Assessors use laptop computers during visits to employers to record the results of the review, assessment decisions and progress made. This is then used to update the database when the assessor returns to the office. The system is able to provide immediate, up-to-date information. Particularly useful are charts showing the progress of all learners. These charts give an instant 'snapshot' of all learners and graphically illustrate the progress that learners have made over the past year. Managers and assessors are very aware of learners' progress. This situation is a

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significant improvement from the previous inspection where this area was judged to be a weakness.

53. Learners are well supported by assessors and employers. Supervisors and skilled technicians provide training in a supportive way and help learners to develop understanding by sharing their knowledge and experiences with them. Learners appreciate this support and feel part of a team in their workplaces. If they cannot complete a particular mandatory element of their NVQ training in their work placement, Seleta TPS Ltd or the employer will arrange for them to work temporarily with another employer. Employers are willing to change work patterns to provide learners with training and experience that generates opportunities for securing NVQ evidence. They willingly allow learners time and facilities for progress reviews and observations. Assessors have a good relationship with employers and most employers show a good supportive interest in their learners. Entry to the programmes is available all year round to suit the learners and employers. Providers' staff offer help to learners who have additional support needs, such as individual tuition for key skills qualifications. Senior staff have spent time in the workplace on a number of occasions helping a learner with additional support needs.

54. Assessment practices have improved since the previous inspection and are now satisfactory. Learners record their work and write up each job from the beginning of their programmes. This information is collated into an individual portfolio and then cross-referenced to the evidence requirements. Learners are given responsibility for this and some good portfolios were seen with a diverse range of evidence, including good use of photographic evidence. Work-based observations are introduced early in the training programmes. These work well, with some good reporting and sound questioning to ensure learners' understanding. However, one observation involved the learner receiving training on an unfamiliar machine.

55. Inductions and initial assessments are satisfactory. Initial assessments are based on school achievements and interviews. Where appropriate, learners carry out a basic skills test. Learners who study towards an NVQ at level 2 in performing engineering operations at college receive additional tests. None of Seleta TPS Ltd's learners are currently identified as needing additional learning support. An assessor carries out induction in the workplace on an individual basis. A comprehensive checklist ensures coverage of all topics but there are no scripts to ensure uniformity of approach.

56. The delivery of key skills is inconsistent. Although more recent starters are being introduced to key skills training early in their programmes and are already showing progress, some learners are unclear about key skills and what they have to do. For those learners who have been on programme for some time, key skills training begins on completion of their NVQ training. One college has learners for an 18-week block-release programme to provide an NVQ at level 2 in performing engineering operations. The college is also supposed to deliver key skills training but some learners do not receive it. The provider, however, completes the process in the workplace, providing tuition when needed.

57. Assessors carry out progress reviews in the workplace every eight weeks. They spend a significant amount of time on the reviews and show good commitment to supporting their learners. The results are recorded on computer and printed out at the end of the review. This is an innovative approach, although inputting the results does at times inhibit the dialogue between the assessor and the learner, who at times takes a passive role. The progress reviews are not thorough enough. There is evidence of documents not being completed, signed or dated. Equal opportunities is covered, but does not promote broader debates about, for example, the learners' responsibilities to others. Targets are set for learners to achieve by the next visit, but these are then sometimes undermined by assessors indicating that achieving set targets.

Leadership and management

58. The operational management of engineering programmes is good. Actions taken have resolved weaknesses identified at the previous inspection. Significant improvements have been made in achieving NVQs, in monitoring learners' progress and in assessment practices. Quality assurance processes have been established which more recently appointed staff find very helpful in enabling them to adapt to the provider's requirements. Good communications exist, with regular, minuted meetings, in particular the programme improvement meetings which staff find useful. The self-assessment report demonstrated the provider's understanding of its strengths and weaknesses. The provider was, however, overly critical in grading this area of learning.

59. Internal verification is satisfactory. Three qualified internal verifiers observe assessments on a regular basis. Assessors may be observed in the workplace as many as six times each year, or when they carry out a progress review at the provider's Blackheath training centre. External verifier reports show good satisfaction levels, with only relatively minor matters appearing in the action plans from monitoring visits. Portfolio verification has been carried out mainly on completion of programmes, although interim validations are now being implemented.

60. Seven of the 28 learners are from minority ethnic groups. There are no female learners, although the provider is proposing to target girls' schools. Staff development is satisfactory. The provider recruits well-qualified applicants and supports them while they achieve assessor qualifications. Coaching and support is good, although there is insufficient formal training such as in the development in equal opportunities.

Business administration, management & professional

Business administration, management & professional		2
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
<i>Business administration</i>		
- NVQ training for young people	10	2
- Apprenticeships for young people	1	None

Business administration*Strengths*

- good achievement rate
- well-managed assessments and progress reviews
- good resources
- very good pastoral and learning support
- good programme management

Weaknesses

- insufficient work placements
- inconsistent record-keeping

Achievement and standards

61. Retention and achievement rates for the business administration NVQ at level 2 have improved significantly from 48 per cent during the period 2001-02 to 100 per cent in 2003-04. Of the 10 learners recruited in 2004-05, one has left for personal reasons. Achievement rates for business administration learners in previous years were disappointing. In 2003-04, one learner was recruited and is progressing satisfactorily. Target-setting and monitoring of learners' progress have improved and learners now complete units much more quickly.

62. The work presented in portfolios is good and reflects learners' attainments and progress. Portfolios are well organised and well presented, and contain a wide range of evidence including records of direct observations, professional discussions, written answers to questions and personal statements. Learners have a good understanding of how to cross-reference their evidence to NVQ units and clearly demonstrate which evidence is meeting the criteria for key skills. Learners develop good vocational skills by practising what they learn through work experience in the general office. They have opportunities to gain additional qualifications, and four learners have achieved an examination-based qualification in IT.

63. Many learners have had poor experiences at school or college and join the programme with few aspirations and low self-confidence. They develop positive

attitudes to their training with Seleta TPS Ltd, increase their self-confidence and demonstrate good motivation to learn new skills.

Quality of education and training

64. Assessments and progress reviews are well planned. Initial assessments provide an accurate basis on which to plan support for learners' needs. Inductions are comprehensive and thorough. Assessors visit external workplaces regularly to observe learners and use a variety of techniques to check and reinforce learners' knowledge and understanding. Internal verification practices are satisfactory. Assessors are very well regarded by the learners and their employers. An effective monitoring system records progress, identifies missed deadlines and sets targets. Health and safety and equal opportunities are discussed during progress reviews. Copies of the review records are kept in learners' portfolios in date order. Learners can refer to these for guidance about the work required before the next review. However, some of the records in learners' portfolios are not maintained consistently. For example, inspectors found that some evidence is not authenticated, and signatures and dates are missing from some documents.

65. Seleta TPS Ltd has a good range of resources to support learning. The training rooms at the Croydon site are well equipped with up-to-date teaching and learning resources, including interactive boards which are used well to support learning. Learners have access to good-quality handouts and they can access the internet for research. Trainers are occupationally competent and some have teaching qualifications. Others are working towards teaching and further academic qualifications, or plan to do so in the near future. All assessors are appropriately qualified.

66. All staff provide good pastoral support for learners and offer guidance to those who experience personal difficulties. Many learners have complex and difficult social and personal issues. Staff are very caring and are responsive to these issues and learners' needs. They establish good working relationships with the learners who are confident in approaching staff at any time. Many learners have been able to remain on the programme after receiving individual help and guidance on personal issues from staff. Learners receive guidance and support on legal and health matters, housing and finance. Their confidence and self-esteem improve through the development of their skills and knowledge. Seleta TPS Ltd has developed a particularly useful peer mentoring scheme for new learners. The well-developed team culture is maintained and learners' motivation is increased.

67. Overall, off-the-job training is satisfactory. Training activities are well planned and structured. Teaching plans have clear objectives. The pace of training is designed to meet learners' needs. Training resources are good and learners have good access to computers. A range of training methods is planned and used to maintain learners' interest and involvement. Learners' literacy and numeracy needs are assessed and individual needs are met. All new learners are screened for literacy and numeracy skills at the beginning of their programmes and facilities are available for learners to receive

appropriate support.

68. Learners who do not have an external work placement are given useful and relevant work experience in the administration department. They have clear job descriptions and are required to sign confidentiality agreements. A good range of practical activities allows learners to practise and develop business skills. Learners have good opportunities to develop support and supervisory skills. For example, some learners on work placements with Seleta TPS Ltd have been promoted to supervisory roles within the administration office. These roles include the allocation of work and deputising for the office manager. However, there are not enough external work-placement opportunities for learners. Although the work in the administration office at Seleta TPS Ltd is a valuable resource, learners are currently not experiencing more diverse business administration practices that could be found in a range of external employment situations. The provider acknowledges this and has identified it as a weakness in its most recent self-assessment report.

Leadership and management

69. The operational management of the business administration provision is good. The staff work well together and meet regularly to share information and ideas and discuss learners' needs and progress. A culture of continuous improvement has enabled many practices to be improved to meet learners' needs more effectively. For example, administration managers are working with learners to develop a procedures manual for the administration office. Staff are appraised regularly and detailed feedback reports and action plans are prepared and implemented. Assessors have a good understanding of their roles and responsibilities and they understand the quality assurance procedures well. Internal verification procedures are generally satisfactory. However, there are some inconsistencies in the completion of documents which have not been identified.

70. Equality of opportunity is promoted well. Learners are informed at induction about the anti-harassment, complaints and appeals policies and procedures. All learners understand their rights and responsibilities. Learners' understanding of equality of opportunity issues is checked during progress reviews.

71. All staff are involved in the self-assessment process. The most recent report identified some of the strengths and weaknesses found by inspectors.

Information & communications technology

Information & communications technology		2
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
<i>Developing IT systems</i> - NVQ training for young people	32	2

Developing IT systems

Strengths

- good achievement rate
- very good teaching
- very effective use of resources to support learning
- good pastoral and learning support

Weaknesses

- insufficient opportunities for on-the-job training

Achievement and standards

72. Achievement levels for learners on the ICT programme have improved since the previous inspection and are now good. Achievement and retention rates have increased from 38 per cent in 2001-02 to 52 per cent in 2002-03. It is too early to identify achievement rates for 2003-04, or the current year, but many learners are making good progress. Many learners begin with little or no IT knowledge, or have poor learning experiences from their time at school or college. They receive a good initial skills assessment of their literacy, numeracy and IT abilities. These assessments are used to identify training needs and learning styles. Programmes, including key skills, are matched to learners' needs. Learners are motivated to gain new skills and confidence in using computers and describe their progress as very good.

73. Most learners carry out additional studies and project work for up to two days each week. Their knowledge of software packages is good. They use spreadsheet and database techniques to manipulate computer files to find solutions to set problems. Their ability to diagnose hardware problems is very good and they frequently use the information they gain to upgrade their own personal computer systems. Portfolios are well presented and contain evidence of the learners' progress and development.

Quality of education and training

74. Teaching is very good. All of the sessions observed were graded good. Seleta TPS Ltd has many competent tutors who have up-to-date knowledge and experience. In one very good session the tutor discussed current software providers' proposals for new products and asked learners to consider the impact these developments would have on system resources and design. The working relationships between tutors and learners are very good and in many instances this contributes to free and uninhibited discussions. During lesson presentations, learners were always prepared to ask questions and they frequently received answers that developed their understanding and promoted further learning. Most learners are highly motivated. When asked, they said that their interest in, and understanding of, IT had been stimulated and developed and most were planning to move to a level 3 NVQ course at the end of the programme. Tutor availability is very good and they are always available to provide help and advice to learners outside normal session times. In one example, a learner had brought his personal computer for advice on available upgrades. Possible solutions were discussed and were used to further develop learning. Good attention is paid to learners' preferred learning styles. Details are available to tutors from the registers and these are used to adjust teaching methods to meet the learners' needs.

75. IT resources to support learning are good. They include many high-specification computers operating industry standard software with internet and server connections through broadband, and a wireless network. Learners have password-protected individual login identification and are able to save their files to the main server. Learners cannot currently access their files from home, but plans exist to provide this facility. Most teaching areas are good, well laid out and have either a free-standing or a ceiling-mounted data projector. Presentation facilities for learners are good. One teaching room with an interactive whiteboard is available for tutors' demonstrations. Staff are well provided with laptop computers which can be used remotely for lesson preparation and updating learners' progress records. Automatic data synchronisation takes place when staff reconnect to Seleta TPS Ltd's wireless network. However, some teaching accommodation in the main open-access computer area is unsatisfactory as noise levels are high and there are frequent interruptions as learners enter and leave the area.

76. Pastoral support for learners is good. Many of them are identified as having additional learning and significant social support needs. Staff concentrate on providing help for learners to overcome these barriers to learning. Learners frequently receive advice from staff about personal health, financial, legal and housing problems. Staff often support learners by accompanying them to relevant agencies to assist in resolving problems affecting learning. Learners' attendance is closely monitored and absences are quickly followed up to determine their cause. Support for learners without computer access at home is good and learners frequently attend the training centre during their directed study days to develop their learning. There is adequate support for learners with basic literacy and numeracy needs. Facilities for learners with disabilities are satisfactory. These include a hearing loop, a pen text reader, audio tape recording facilities and a laptop computer loan scheme for those who experience difficulties with note taking.

Additional adaptive technologies, while not immediately available, can be provided for learners when needed.

77. Learners' assessments are marked regularly and are satisfactory, but frequently there are insufficient supportive comments or indications to the learners how they might progress. The recently introduced management information system is good and information from the system is used during the monthly progress reviews to monitor learners' progress against anticipated completion dates. The results of these reviews are well documented and details are entered into the management information system, but they do not always contain achievable and measurable short-term targets for the learners.

78. The range of courses available is satisfactory and provides learners with progression routes from E2E to level 2 NVQ courses. Many learners who successfully complete NVQ at level 2 are given the opportunity to progress to higher-level courses free of charge. Course promotion is good. Many courses are advertised in ethnic community group and free local newspapers to attract a broad range of potential learners. Other learners apply directly for courses, and some are referred through Connexions, schools and other agencies. Initial advice to learners is satisfactory and includes details of available courses together with possible progression routes and career opportunities. Learning support needs are frequently identified and actioned at this stage.

79. The provider does not offer sufficient opportunities for on-the-job training. The ICT provision is designed to prepare learners for careers in the computing industry. The computer engineering NVQ is not part of the framework specified by the IT sector skills council, but is one that can be awarded without the need for evidence of competence from the workplace. Emphasis is placed on providing learners with the experience of building computers from scratch, installing operating systems, software, and upgrades. Some progress has been made since the previous inspection, but only four of 32 learners have so far received any on-the-job training. This is unsatisfactory as many employers now expect job applicants to have received this training in preparation for employment.

Leadership and management

80. Managers provide clear leadership and direction. However, the post of programme leader for IT has been vacant for several months. The support to staff and learners previously provided by the programme leader has been shared among other staff who provide support when time permits.

81. Regular meetings are managed effectively and agreed actions are recorded. The self-assessment process is good and involves all staff. Staff development is satisfactory and uses information from the lesson observation programme, with the focus on raising the effectiveness of staff. Staff work very well together. The promotion of equal opportunities is satisfactory. Some of the forms and handouts are designed by staff who choose appropriate fonts and paper colour to support learners with dyslexia. Feedback received from learners through the induction questionnaire is frequently used to improve inductions.

Foundation programmes

Foundation programmes		1
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
<i>Employability/employment training</i> - Entry to Employment	13	1

Employability/employment training

Strengths

- good achievement rate
- very good standards of teaching and learning
- good use of resources
- extremely effective assessments and progress reviews
- excellent personal support for learners
- good programme management

Weaknesses

- narrow range of programmes

Achievement and standards

82. Learners on E2E have access to a good range of accreditation opportunities, including certificates in literacy and numeracy and ICT, as well as modules towards an NVQ at level 2 in business administration and specialist computer engineering awards at level 1, where appropriate. All learners who complete the programme gain certificates. Many learners are also awarded internal certificates to reflect the advances they make in personal development, such as in attendance, punctuality, reliability and teamwork. Learners are clearly motivated by the progression targets they are set, and the recognition they gain from their attainments. Many learners have improved their levels of self-confidence and personal skills during their time on the E2E programme.

83. During the period 2003-04, 57 per cent of learners progressed to a recognised outcome, that is, employment or further education and training. It is common practice for E2E learners to progress to further training with the provider and then on to employment. Five learners who began with E2E comprise a substantial proportion of the current intake on business administration courses. There are examples of exceptional individual progress. Only two learners have left the programme before completion, in the past year. If learners are unsuited to the E2E programme or absent themselves they are carefully monitored and counselled.

Quality of education and training

84. Seleta TPS Ltd's staff provide a very good standard of teaching and learning in group and individual sessions. All teaching is good or better. Teaching is well planned and responsive to the individual needs of the learners. Learning is frequently practical and involves active participation. For instance, media production is used imaginatively as the context for enhancing literacy skills. Learners are instructed in video production techniques and then as a group review their performance commenting perceptively on speaking and listening skills and body language. Vocabulary extension, research and written work are also included in this project. Numeracy tutors work constructively to break down obstacles to attainment. Numeracy is taught through practical projects, placing emphasis on the language and concepts of mathematics. Learners enjoy good support for their ICT skills. One learner was particularly proud that he had completed his assignments on spreadsheets only four weeks into the course.

85. Tutors make effective use of project work to improve learners' attainments in all the subject areas. Two E2E learners have been integrated with a level 2 computer engineering course on a trial basis and demonstrate their extensive skills and knowledge confidently. Individual tuition is very effective in providing extra literacy and numeracy support and as part of tutorial reviews. Learning and attainments are apparent and clearly recorded by tutors in these sessions. In the best individual sessions, tutors work very clearly from assessed levels to challenge and stimulate learners. Learners show good levels of motivation to learn new skills and to progress.

86. The training centre in which E2E takes place is equipped with good resources. Teaching rooms are pleasant and vary in size appropriate to their purpose. In one room an interactive whiteboard is used well to display a scheme of work for the learning module, for viewing video material and for recording learners' comments. All staff have a laptop computer to help with planning, development and the delivery of training. Tutorial reviews are conducted directly using computerised records. When a tutor asked one learner about his progress in a particular piece of work, she was able to view immediately what he had done, through shared access to his file on the network. Learners involved in computer engineering and graphics as part of the E2E course have access to good resources. Learners are pleased with the facilities on offer.

87. Most staff are very well qualified and experienced in their specialist areas. The range of continuous professional development available to them is satisfactory. Although those staff teaching literacy and numeracy have not been trained in the use of the adult core curriculum, this is not having an impact on learning.

88. Seleta TPS Ltd uses extremely effective systems for assessments and progress reviews. All learners on E2E have an initial assessment in literacy, numeracy and ICT skills as soon as they begin. They then receive diagnostic assessments as soon as is appropriate. The computerised testing programme is implemented correctly and thoroughly. Tutors select tasks carefully to be able to identify a pattern of strengths and weaknesses. In giving feedback on the results, tutors are exceptionally thorough in

exploring further issues, discussing the implications with the learner and planning realistic support. In one session, the tutor succeeded in motivating a learner to work on improving his reading and writing through a mixture of inspiring challenges and boosting his self-esteem by pointing out the areas he was shown to be good at.

89. All E2E learners have weekly progress reviews. Tutors keep computerised individual learning plans in addition to the E2E paper-based passport. The format for these plans, designed by a member of staff, is particularly thorough. There is space for weekly targets in each of the subject areas, as well as targets for improvement in attitudes and behaviour. Tutors offer practical solutions for issues causing concern. If a learner has a problem with time-keeping, they are set a challenge to complete a small project within a set timescale. Learners become more self-reliant in their learning through the constructive use of research and project work in the training centre or at home. Staff use case conferences in E2E team meetings to check on learners' progress.

90. Seleta TPS Ltd provides excellent personal support for learners. They can have extra individual tuition for literacy and numeracy, as part of a flexible timetable. A member of staff has recently been appointed to provide specialist support for learners with dyslexia. The training centre manager takes an active role in personal support. Learners know that they can sort out issues on an individual basis with her, as well as in their tutorial. Temporary suspensions from training are used creatively and positively. Learners past and present are very clear in their praise of the support provided by Seleta TPS Ltd.

91. The E2E programme is restricted in its range. Only two vocational areas are offered, business administration and computer engineering. The provider deliberately chose not to extend its programme following the previous inspection, but chose instead to concentrate on improving the quality of its existing programme. Learners do not have external work-experience placements as a matter of routine. One learner is currently receiving real work experience in the provider's business administration office. Most of the E2E learners joined the programme specifically for computer engineering, but there is room for only one session in the workshop on their timetables. Several learners expressed a desire to do more.

Leadership and management

92. The E2E programme has been redesigned and substantially improved in the past year. Programme management and quality assurance is now good overall. The overall course design is coherent and presented in flow diagram form. All procedures are analysed in detail and recorded in the management file. A small but expanding course team meets regularly to discuss learners' progress and programme aims. A powerful management information system, designed by Seleta TPS Ltd's staff, ensures that the provider has a constant capability of monitoring individual learners. It is also used to measure progress against programme targets and to provide information for returns to the funding body. All staff are involved in the self-assessment process. The self-assessment report acknowledges the quality improvements made in E2E, but underestimates all of the key strengths.

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93. The management of the E2E programme epitomises good practice in equality of opportunity. The excellent support for learners is enhanced by the fact that 80 per cent of the staff delivering training are representative of minority ethnic groups, reflecting the profile of the learner group. They are strongly committed to their aims for these learners who come from very difficult personal backgrounds. Staff make efforts to keep up to date with the language and culture of the young people they train. Extra curricular events, include links to a cultural awareness project, expert input from health professionals and fun events organised by the learners themselves. The presentation of the learners' handbook is complex for this learner group, but equality and anti-discrimination matters are covered well in inductions and personal tutorials.