

INSPECTION REPORT

Hounslow LEA

11 March 2005



ADULT LEARNING
INSPECTORATE

Grading

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

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

Inspectors use a five-point scale to summarise their judgements about the quality of provision in occupational/curriculum areas 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.

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Hounslow LEA

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DESCRIPTION OF THE PROVIDER

1. Hounslow adult and community education (HACE) service provides direct delivery of adult and community learning across the borough. Classes are provided at eight main learning centres based in secondary schools, and 75 additional community venues, including primary schools and community centres. The management and central administration team is based in the lifelong learning leisure and cultural services department of the local authority, and HACE reports to the assistant director for community and partnerships.
2. In 2003-04, HACE had 9,341 enrolments for accredited courses, and 5,321 learners. For non-accredited courses there were 7,494 enrolments and 4,637 learners. The service offers courses of varying lengths, from one-off, weekend family learning events to 34 weeks of 15 hours each week for Access to higher education courses. The most common course length is two hours each week, for 10, 20 or 30 weeks.
3. HACE has been realigned during the past five years to develop more courses in local community venues. The aim is to attract people who would not normally become involved in learning. HACE's objective for the next three years is to extend this strategy. A manager was appointed for September 2004 to oversee, plan and monitor the widening participation activities throughout the borough. Skills for life, especially English for speakers of other languages (ESOL), feature strongly in HACE's priorities.
4. HACE is led by a principal, assisted by a single vice principal. The rest of the strategic management team is made up of a senior information manager and a senior administration and finance manager. Curriculum managers are based in the main learning centres and most are responsible for more than one area of learning. They also oversee the management of the learning centre in which they are based, by being the link for the head teacher of that school. The eight HACE centres based in secondary schools are evenly spread throughout the borough. The centres serve as administrative hubs, and are the main venues for evening and core provision, especially where specialist resources are required.
5. Hounslow is a west London borough with a culturally and ethnically diverse population. Hounslow has pockets of affluence and poverty. Using average ward scores, Hounslow is ranked 115 out of 354 areas in the index of multiple deprivation. In the west of the borough, there are wards where fewer than 50 per cent of resident adults have qualifications above level 1. In these areas, engagement in learning has been poor, educational achievements are low, and numeracy and literacy skills are poor.

SCOPE OF PROVISION

Business administration, management & professional

6. HACE offers part-time courses in business administration, management, professional and accounting, funded through the local Learning and Skills Council (LSC). At the time of inspection, the borough was offering six nationally recognised courses at level 1 and 2 in computerised accounts, level 1 courses in manual book-keeping, a classroom and teaching assistants' course at level 1 and 2, and level 3 non-accredited accounts courses. There is also a course at level 4 in teaching. Courses are delivered through 14 centres in secondary and primary schools, including outreach centres throughout the borough. Courses operate from 10 weeks to 45 weeks and are available during mornings, afternoons and evenings, Monday to Friday. One computerised accounting course takes place on a Saturday. At the time of inspection, there are 490 learners, of whom approximately 46 per cent are from minority ethnic backgrounds, 7 per cent have declared disabilities and 4 per cent are over 60 years of age.

Information & communications technology

7. HACE has 577 learners enrolled on nearly 90 information and communications technology (ICT) courses. Since 2004, 1,134 learners have enrolled on ICT courses. Of these, 30 per cent were men. The range of courses includes word processing, web design, digital photography, computer maintenance and database. Ten per cent of the courses are targeted at specific learner groups. The provision takes place in 17 venues across the borough, including a range of community venues and schools, a high street location and a mobile bus. The courses are offered primarily at entry and level 1, with an increasing number of courses offered at level 2. Just over 70 per cent of courses are accredited internally or externally. Courses are offered during the day and in the evenings and include some weekend provision. Courses generally last for between 20 and 60 hours in total. At the time of inspection, 29.1 per cent of learners were men, and 43.5 per cent were from minority ethnic backgrounds. Twenty point six per cent of the learners were older members of the community. Just over 6 per cent of learners have disabilities. HACE has 40 tutors and eight senior tutors, supported by a curriculum manager and two curriculum support officers.

Hospitality, sport, leisure & travel

8. HACE currently has 965 learners enrolled on 61 hospitality, sport and leisure courses. In 2003-04 there were 2,347 enrolments on 165 courses. Courses include yoga, keep fit, Pilates, walks in London, tai chi, football, exercise for backs, slimnastics, sugar craft and Italian cookery. The hospitality programme is small in relation to the exercise and fitness classes. Most classes last between one and two hours. There are three accredited courses in basic food hygiene, football coaching and sugar craft. Most courses operate termly and last for between 10 and 30 weeks. More than 50 per cent of the courses take place during the day, but there is also evening and weekend provision. Courses are held at 19 venues in a variety of schools, church halls, residential homes, libraries and community centres throughout the borough. Some courses are specifically intended for the older age groups and those with specific ailments. Most of the learners are women. Just 14 per cent of enrolments are by men. Thirty-three per cent of enrolments are by learners from minority ethnic groups. A curriculum manager and 26 part-time tutors are employed in this area.

Hairdressing & beauty therapy

9. HACE provides a range of accredited and non-accredited hairdressing and beauty therapy courses. There are 259 learners on beauty therapy programmes and 42 learners on hairdressing programmes. One hundred and twenty-one learners are following accredited beauty therapy courses, including a beauty specialist diploma, make-up and manicure certificate, manicure and pedicure certificate, and waxing certificate courses offered at level 2. The accredited hairdressing courses are offered at Open College Network (OCN) level 1 and level 2, and 42 learners are currently on the programmes. One hundred and thirty-eight learners are on HACE's first-rung courses, which are non-accredited and include Asian make-up, Indian bridal make-up, manicure and nail art. Most courses are delivered at the provider's seven main sites, but a range of courses is delivered at community venues.

Health, social care & public services

10. The provider offers a wide range of learning opportunities in early years, play work, counselling and complementary therapies. These are delivered in school premises and a range of other community settings throughout the borough. One hundred and sixty-three learners are following early years courses which are offered from level 1 to 3. An introductory programme at level 1 provides progression to the national vocational qualification (NVQ) courses at level 2 and 3. The certificate and diploma in childcare and education is offered in partnership with a local secondary school. HACE also delivers the certificate and diploma in play work and provides internal verification for programmes delivered in two other London boroughs. Counselling courses are offered from level 1 to 3. Sixty-six learners are following the 15-week level 1 courses, a further 33 have enrolled for the level 2 programme and 16 learners are enrolled for the level 3 certificate in counselling skills. The complementary therapy programme includes courses in aromatherapy, reiki, shiatsu, reflexology and Indian head massage. Forty learners are following accredited courses at level 3 and 106 learners are on non-accredited adult learning programmes.

Visual & performing arts & media

11. In 2003-04 there were 1,554 enrolments on visual arts courses. Enrolments for 2004-05 stood at 1,139 at the time of inspection. The courses offered include drawing, pottery, upholstery, jewellery, photography, floristry, lace making, spinning and weaving, dressmaking and painting. Fifty-eight per cent of classes are held in the daytime, 39 per cent in the evenings and 3 per cent at weekends. Thirty-nine per cent of courses are non-accredited, and 61 per cent are accredited. Women constitute 81 per cent of the learners.

12. Visual arts courses are offered at 12 sites throughout the borough and take place mainly in local schools and community venues such as the town hall, community centres and day centres. There are 44 part-time tutors, most of whom deliver one class each week. A new subject-specialist curriculum manager joined HACE six months ago. The curriculum manager has overall responsibility for visual arts curriculum planning, communication with tutors and writing the department's self-assessment report. The curriculum manager is assisted by a part-time curriculum support co-ordinator.

13. Currently, there are 1,131 enrolments in music and associated courses, and 41 learners are working towards a qualification. Courses in music and performing arts range from half an hour to five hours each week. Most non-accredited courses last for between five and 30 weeks. Shorter music courses include vocal and instrumental lessons, including saxophone, flute, electric guitar and keyboard. In performing arts areas there are courses in bollywood dance, street dance and oriental belly dancing courses. Accredited course provision includes music technology, DJ Skills, and AS level drama. Currently, there are 199 courses in music and associated areas. Most courses take place in the late afternoon or in the evening.

14. Music classes take place throughout the borough, and most are located at HACE's music centre attached to a local school. However, more courses are being offered at community venues. The curriculum manager has overall responsibility for the curriculum area, and for the management of the music centre.

English, languages & communications

15. At the time of the inspection, 71 classes were operating. Of these, 45 were in foreign languages, nine were in British Sign Language (BSL) and communications, and the rest were in English. Twelve languages were offered, ranging from Spanish, French and other European languages to Asian and oriental languages such as Japanese, Mandarin and Punjabi. Most language classes lead to qualifications, the most common being OCN accreditation at level 1 and 2, and Oxford, Cambridge and RSA qualifications in languages for work and travel. English classes are mainly at general certificate of secondary education (GCSE) level, with a small number of classes in English as a foreign language. Many classes at level 1 follow on from non-accredited taster courses offered in the autumn term and run for two hours each week over 20 weeks. Most classes operate in the evening and 10 learning centres are used. The area of learning had 1,096 learners. Sixty-nine per cent of the learners were women.

Foundation programmes

16. In 2003-4 foundation programmes accounted for 13.2 per cent of HACE's provision. At the time of the inspection, there were 111 learners on literacy and numeracy courses and 635 learners on ESOL courses. The provision consists of 12 literacy and four numeracy courses. Literacy and numeracy classes take place at main learning centres, an outreach venue and in the workplace. Fifty-two ESOL classes operate from six main learning centres and 17 community venues. These include schools, a nursery and church halls. Learners can join classes at any time. Learners originate from a wide range of ethnic, religious, social and language backgrounds.

17. Three 10-week modules are provided for each mixed-level literacy and numeracy course in the main learning centres. There are six five-week ESOL modules for each course. ESOL courses are provided at entry level 1, 2 and 3. Level 1 and 2 courses are offered at a local college. Modules are matched with the national core curriculum and moderated internally. Learners may achieve internal accreditation for each module, and may take national tests in the summer term.

18. Literacy and numeracy courses operate for two hours each week and take place during the day and in the evening. Learners may take national tests at entry level 3, level 1 and level 2. Most ESOL courses operate for four hours in two weekly sessions, and learners may take national tests in speaking and listening skills. Three ESOL courses operate for six hours each week in three sessions as a pilot. Learners may take national tests in speaking, listening, reading and writing. ESOL classes take place in the day and evening, and on Saturdays.

19. HACE has seven tutors and a curriculum co-ordinator for literacy and numeracy, and 23 tutors and a curriculum co-ordinator for ESOL. The strategic manager post was vacant at the time of the inspection.

Family learning

20. Hounslow family learning provision comprises family literacy, language and numeracy (FLLN), and wider family learning (WFL) programmes. Family fun days are used to attract learners into the various programmes. These range from one-off taster sessions through to five- and 10-week courses in the WFL programme, and intensive courses in family literacy involving four sessions each week for 10 weeks. All provision is free of charge, with an entitlement to free childcare for learners. Most sessions are held during the day, with a few in early evenings and two on Saturdays. Family learning is characterised by an extensive network of partnerships, and sessions are held in schools and a wide variety of venues throughout the borough.

21. During the inspection week, 169 learners were enrolled on seven FLLN and 20 WFL courses, totalling 36 sessions. These were delivered through 22 venues by five FLLN and 18 WFL part-time tutors. FLLN is managed within the skills for life curriculum jointly with the borough education department family and community team (FaCT). WFL is a cross-curricular programme drawing on the expertise of other curriculum areas. Family learning is a key element in the council’s widening participation strategy to achieve social inclusion and improve the skills and economic prospects of all residents.

ABOUT THE INSPECTION

Number of inspectors	14
Number of inspection days	67
Number of learners interviewed	578
Number of staff interviewed	150
Number of locations/sites/learning centres visited	98
Number of partners/external agencies interviewed	31

OVERALL JUDGEMENT

22. The quality of the provision is adequate to meet the reasonable needs of those receiving it. More specifically, leadership and management are good, equality of opportunity and quality assurance are also good. In ICT, the provision is outstanding. In visual and performing arts and media, health, social care and public services, English, languages and communications and family learning, the provision is good. In business administration, management and professional, hospitality, sport, leisure and travel, hairdressing and beauty therapy, and foundation programmes, provision is 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		2
Quality assurance		2

Business administration, management & professional		3
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Other contributory areas - Adult and community learning	490	3

Information & communications technology		1
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Using IT - Adult and community learning	577	1

Hospitality, sport, leisure & travel		3
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Leisure, sport and recreation - Adult and community learning	965	3

Hairdressing & beauty therapy		3
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Other contributory areas - Adult and community learning	301	3

Health, social care & public services		2
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Early years - Adult and community learning	163	2
Counselling - Adult and community learning	115	2
Other contributory areas - Adult and community learning	146	2

Visual & performing arts & media		2
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Arts - Adult and community learning	1139	2
Music - Adult and community learning	1131	2
English, languages & communications		2
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Languages - Adult and community learning	1096	2
Foundation programmes		3
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
ESOL - Adult and community learning	635	3
Literacy and numeracy - Adult and community learning	111	3
Family learning		2
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
- Adult and community learning	169	2

KEY FINDINGS

Achievement and standards

23. Retention and achievement rates are good on most business administration courses.

Learners develop in confidence as they study for their qualifications, taking pride in their work. The standard of work is generally neat and well produced. Some learners recognise development in analytical skills and are achieving at levels beyond their expectations. One learner has been selected as 'student of the year' for the southern region by the awarding body for the level 2 teaching assistants' course. **Retention and achievement rates were low on the level 4 teaching certificate in 2003-04.** Sixty-seven per cent of learners remained on programme and only 61 per cent achieved the qualification. All learners who enrolled in September 2004 are still in learning.

24. In ICT, achievement and retention rates are good for all courses. In 2003-04, of the 2,619 learners who began an ICT course, over 85 per cent were retained and over 70

per cent achieved their intended outcomes. For 2004-05, of the 1,134 learners who have begun courses, nearly 85 per cent have been retained and over 75 per cent have already achieved their expected outcomes. Many learners progress from introductory entry level courses to externally accredited courses at level 1 and 2.

25. Learners in hospitality, sport and leisure recognise their development of good positive health and social benefits. In sports classes, learners are able to maintain and improve their levels of fitness, mobility, flexibility and balance. Many learners identify benefits which include gaining relief from medical conditions such as joint stiffness and back pain, as well as stress relief, the ability to relax and overcoming the effects of illness and injury. **Learners receive good individual attention to their needs during lessons.**

26. In the hairdressing and beauty therapy programmes, retention and achievement rates are good for all courses. Retention rates are improving on accredited courses, from 66 per cent in 2003-04, to 76 per cent in 2004-05. The combined retention rate for all courses has risen from 71 per cent in 2002-03, to 77 per cent in 2003-04. The achievement rate for accredited courses has declined slightly from 87 per cent in 2002-03 to 84 per cent in 2003-04 but remains good. **Learners acquire good practical skills in hairdressing.** Standards are good on all courses.

27. Health and social care learners progress well to higher-level courses and to related employment. Early years learners on NVQ programmes find that often their work placements lead directly to paid employment. Most learners completing the NVQs take up paid work within the sector. Learners on the full-time diploma in childcare and education, delivered in conjunction with a local secondary school, achieved a 100 per cent pass rate in 2002-03 and 2003-04. All learners who completed the programme gained work with early years organisations.

28. Learners demonstrate exceptionally good standards of technical and creative skills across the range of visual arts courses. Learners are confidently using a very wide range of media. Tutors rapidly develop not only learners' artistic and creative skills, but also their critical and analytical skills.

29. Achievements on non-accredited music programmes in 2003-04 were high, at 95 per cent. However, on many of the 10-week courses which ended in December 2004, retention was low. In the large music ensembles, learners develop technical skills to a very high standard. They take part in public performances, and in the baroque ensemble. Singers and players are gaining a good awareness of performance in the baroque style. **A wide range of individual and ensemble courses is available in music programmes.**

30. Learners develop good skills in language and BSL classes. Learners are very well motivated and diligent in sessions. They are able to listen for general substance and extract essential information from longer passages. They are developing a good range of vocabulary. In beginners' classes, learners are able to read simple passages, and write short sentences using the script of the taught language where necessary. In one exceptional class, learners were able to seek clarification from the tutor and each other in

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the taught language.

31. Achievement and retention rates are satisfactory in literacy and numeracy. In 2003-04 the achievement rate was 68 per cent and the retention rate was 74 per cent. **In ESOL classes, achievement, attendance and retention rates are good.** In 2003-04 the achievement rate was 75 per cent and the retention rate 86 per cent. Learners develop confidence and apply their new skills at home and in the workplace. Managers and colleagues of learners on a workplace English course have commented on the learners' improved skills and their contribution to the business.

32. **Learners on family learning programmes achieve very good standards, particularly in practical skills.** Adults and children collaborate effectively and work well together to develop their creative and problem solving skills. Parents enjoy spending time learning with their children. They develop greater patience and learn to listen to and value their children's views. **The family learning programme does not have sufficient opportunities for accreditation.** HACE does not offer national tests for more able learners on the shorter FLLN courses, and the provider has not investigated the possibility of qualifications in other curriculum areas.

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
Business administration, management & professional	0	0	3	4	0	0	0	7
Information & communications technology	0	6	12	5	1	0	0	24
Hospitality, sport, leisure & travel	0	1	3	6	0	0	0	10
Hairdressing & beauty therapy	0	0	2	4	1	0	0	7
Health, social care & public services	1	5	3	3	0	0	0	12
Visual & performing arts & media	1	3	5	3	0	0	0	12
English, languages & communications	1	1	4	4	0	0	0	10
Foundation programmes	0	5	6	10	1	0	0	22
Family learning	0	4	2	3	0	0	0	9
Total	3	25	40	42	3	0	0	113

33. **In ICT classes, teaching is particularly effective and encourages independent learning.** Over 65 per cent of lessons observed were good or better. There were no unsatisfactory lessons. Tutors plan their lessons well, with clear aims and objectives which they share with the learners at the beginning of the lesson. Good use is made of demonstrations to large and small groups, including the use of data projectors. Tutors make very good use of verbal questioning to check learners' understanding and **offer them very good individual support. This programme employs particularly good resources to support teaching and learning.**

34. **Teaching is good on WFL and FLLN courses.** All lessons are well planned and most are delivered at a good pace. In the best classes, tutors use a range of teaching methods and support materials to demonstrate techniques and reinforce concepts to cater for the range of abilities. Classroom management is good. Effective interactive learning and a good rapport are generated within the classroom. In most joint classes, learners work with and support adults and children from other families. Tutors encourage learners to have confidence in and develop their own critical skills.

35. **Standards of teaching and learning on health and social care courses are very good.** Lessons are carefully planned on all courses and the documents supporting this planning are detailed, focused and well matched to learners' qualification requirements or personal goals. Tutors' considerable teaching and vocational experience promotes good teaching standards and gives learners a good understanding of the demands of their chosen vocational area.

36. **Some of the teaching and skills development in keyboard, drumming and drama courses is exceptional.** Learners are keen to learn and in most lessons make good or very good progress. Relationships between tutors and learners are relaxed, effective and built on mutual respect. In the most successful lessons, the enthusiasm, secure subject knowledge and effective teaching style of the tutor inspires learners to make very good progress in the development of technical skills.

37. **Teaching is dynamic and inventive in visual arts classes.** Teaching is well planned and structured, with clear links in most classes to prior learning, as well as forward progression. Activities range from challenging group tasks to individual project work. Tutors employ a very effective range of strategies to nurture learners' own imagination and creativity, while at the same time matching them with accreditation criteria. Learners are actively encouraged to explore and develop their own ideas.

38. **The quality of teaching is good on languages and sign language courses.** Most language tutors are skilled in the use of the taught language, using it carefully to develop learners' listening skills and to extend their vocabulary. Tutors combine whole-class and interactive techniques well to create lively and varied sessions which engage the learners. In one signing class, particularly effective use was made of pair work for learners to develop vocabulary and practise signing skills. **However, some of the initial advice and guidance given to learners is ineffective.**

39. **The literacy and numeracy programmes include a lot of good teaching. Tutors in literacy and numeracy classes establish a positive environment in which learners work purposefully.** In the better classes, tutors set a brisk pace, and lessons are planned and structured to stimulate and challenge the learners at an appropriate level. Tutors use effective questioning techniques that successfully help learners extend their understanding and skills when carrying out literacy and numeracy tasks.

40. **HACE has developed very good resources to widen participation and develop career opportunities in beauty therapy.** The professional training suite in HACE's Brentford centre is a particularly good resource and is very well equipped with high-quality beauty

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couches, trolleys, and manicure stations. **However, the accommodation for hairdressing in the Longford centre is unsuitable.** The floor is carpeted and there are not enough resources for washing and dressing hair. Learners cannot ensure that cut hair is safely and thoroughly removed from the floor after practical activities. The room is too small for the development of practical skills.

41. **Monitoring and assessment of learners' progress in hairdressing and beauty therapy is ineffective.** There is no evidence of evaluative feedback to learners, and monitoring sheets give no guidance for improvement.

42. **A very good specialist music centre** is available to learners on a school site in the centre of the borough. It has very well-equipped rehearsal rooms, and good spaces for performance by large groups. Well-resourced teaching spaces cater for a particularly broad range of instrumental and performance styles. **Learners are supplied with a very good range of supplementary learning materials,** including specialist compact discs (CDs).

43. The accommodation in some outreach venues for ESOL and literacy and numeracy classes is excellent. Two courses operate in a new nursery which is suitably light and bright, and where a free crèche is available for learners' children during classes. Some classrooms are easily accessible for local communities. However, some venues suffer from being next to noisy classrooms and one is next to a playground. In summer the windows have to be kept closed.

44. Family learning tutors have enough good subject knowledge and vocational expertise to enhance learning on all programmes. Most tutors have adult teaching qualifications. WFL tutors are drawn mainly from the wider curriculum to utilise their subject expertise. Many are practising professionals in their field.

45. HACE has **an extensive range of activities for music learners.** The large ensemble groups give regular concerts at professional and semi-professional venues throughout west London. These groups include the festival choir, the symphony orchestra, and the Isleworth Baroque. HACE has also planned a singing tour of European churches for the festival choir. There are regular public performance opportunities for all groups.

46. **Tutors provide good personal support for learners in hairdressing and beauty therapy,** especially on courses for minority ethnic groups. Learners in Indian bridal make-up developed a range of basic skills in make-up and long hair styling during the 10-week course. In one outreach centre, learners had increased their confidence in their personal appearance through an Asian make-up course.

47. **The provision of courses in business administration is well structured to meet community needs.** For instance, HACE set up a level 3 non-accredited course in accounts to meet the specific requirements of employed learners. The times and locations of most sessions are arranged to fit in with childcare arrangements.

48. **A very good range of ICT programmes meets the wider needs of the community.** The programmes are available at many outreach centres and provide a service that is

highly valued by learners as meeting their vocational and social needs. HACE has established good collaborative and partnership work with community groups to provide funded projects in the community. Such projects include a mobile bus fitted with computer workstations with internet access. The focus has been on entry level and level 1 courses to meet the needs of the community, but the range and quantity of level 2 and level 3 programmes are being increased rapidly to meet the demand for higher-level qualifications. In many instances this demand is from learners who have progressed from entry level through level 1 and level 2.

49. **HACE has a good range of courses in visual arts** throughout the borough. New initiatives have been introduced to widen participation, including courses in Asian fashion and Asian garlands, and other art classes targeted at elderly learners who will not attend learning centres in the evening. The provision of courses covers the more usual courses such as dressmaking, watercolours, upholstery, interior design, mosaics and art, but also includes courses where specialist accommodation is provided, such as wood turning and pottery.

50. **Learners have good access to a very good range of 12 languages** throughout the borough. As well as the more common European languages, there are courses in Arabic, Hindi, Punjabi, Japanese and Mandarin. HACE has established a clear progression model that extends from an initial non-accredited taster course to accredited courses at level 1, 2 and 3.

51. **Family learning programmes include effective widening participation strategies to meet community needs.** Free crèche provision on FLLN programmes enables many learners to take part in the programmes. A wide range of childcare provision is provided, including learning centre crèches, the provision of on-site facilities, infill into school nurseries and access to neighbouring community childcare. Many learners could not attend without access to childcare.

52. **The initial advice and guidance given to some language learners is ineffective.** New learners who join the non-accredited beginners' language courses are not funded to receive additional learning support. Learners interviewed were unclear about ways to identify their support needs and how their needs would be met. Detailed guidance for learners is not readily available before enrolment. General marketing literature gives a brief description of each course, but intending learners do not have access to specialised language-related guidance to inform their choice.

53. **ICT is not used sufficiently to support learning in ESOL and literacy and numeracy classes.** This weakness was identified in the provider's self-assessment report. There is insufficient evidence in learners' files of the use of ICT to produce good copies of written work. Some learners use computers at home, and want to develop their ICT skills, including the development of good reading and comprehension and opportunities to develop literacy and ESOL skills in the context of real work. ICT is being introduced, but at the time of the inspection, most venues did not have computers readily available.

54. **Business administration courses do not have a sufficient variety of resources to**

enhance learners' experience of learning. Too much emphasis is placed on paper-based materials to support teaching and learning. Overhead projectors are seldom used and in the only lesson where a data projector and interactive whiteboard were available, they were used as a projector screen.

55. **Some of the accommodation for sport and leisure courses is poor.** Risk assessments have been carried out on all venues. At some venues, learning is adversely affected by insufficient heating and ventilation and suffers from extraneous noise, for example from school children. This was particularly noticeable during the relaxation period in some sessions.

56. **Individual learning plans are ineffective.** They do not identify learners' goals sufficiently at the beginning of programmes. Many learners do not formally identify their individual goals or state their reasons for attending courses. Where goals are identified they are recorded in the individual learning plan but are often not specific or measurable. **HACE is not responsive enough to the needs of individual learners in literacy and numeracy programmes.**

57. **In family learning, the systems for formal monitoring of learners' progress and progression are incomplete.** The initial assessment tool on FLLN is not good enough to assess the range of learners' abilities and there is no formal diagnostic assessment. Individual learning plans are used throughout HACE, but they do not identify individual learning goals properly and are not used effectively to monitor progress.

Leadership and management

58. **Tutors are well supported.** HACE has done much to resolve the support problems identified in this area in the self-assessment report. New tutors have mentors, and individual support and guidance regarding paperwork and systems. Tutors feel well supported and not isolated and are kept well informed through e-mails and team meetings. Where tutors are not able to attend meetings they are sent the minutes of those meetings. There are frequent drop-in sessions throughout the borough to allow tutors to gain additional skills in, for example, ICT and lesson planning.

59. **Curriculum leadership is outstanding in ICT.** Clear strategic direction is given to staff which is understood throughout the ICT provision. A shared, very positive ethos focuses on widening participation and improving the quality of teaching and learning. HACE has strong links with the community and the partnership projects such as the ICT bus. Learning centres within the community are highly valued by learners.

60. Learning centres provide a well-managed, safe and non-threatening environment. A wide range of learners from minority ethnic backgrounds who speak many different languages works harmoniously together within the centres. Many courses are designed to meet the needs of disadvantaged learners, and where a need is identified then additional support is available. **Additional support for learners is well planned and effective.** The relatively small support fund is well managed and used efficiently. **However, in business administration, the systems to ensure that individual learners' needs**

are met, including literacy, numeracy and language needs, are not fully developed. Not all tutors are fully aware of the available support and some tutors are not aware how to access support facilities.

61. HACE has recently introduced new accredited courses in beauty therapy to provide learners with career progression opportunities. **However, the curriculum planning for the timely implementation of these courses was ineffective.** A vocational specialist was not appointed to co-ordinate the programme until two months after it began.

62. **Curriculum management in health and social care is good,** supporting growth in provision and continuous improvement. **The programme is responsive in meeting community and learners' needs.** HACE has productive working relationships with a wide range of early years service providers and statutory and voluntary agencies in the borough. These include the Hounslow early years development partnership, Sure Start, the early years training forum west London, and a very wide range of nursery, school and pre-school settings.

63. **Visual arts has a particularly effective curriculum leadership.** The new curriculum manager has communicated well with tutors in this area. Regular quality improvement audits of register files take place to ensure that documents are completed correctly. There are records of follow-up actions and good support being provided when files have not been completed or where tutors do not understand some of the processes. Tutors have a high level of trust in managers and feel that managers are responsive to new ideas. Tutors feel well supported and acknowledge the open management style. They appreciate the specialist subject knowledge of their new curriculum manager. **Internal verification in this area of learning is particularly thorough.**

64. The management team for music and performing arts has been changed recently, and the new curriculum manager is energetically broadening the range and location of courses within the area of learning, to good effect. **However, some of the quality monitoring arrangements are incomplete in music.**

65. The arrangements for ensuring quality improvements in languages are good. New staff are mentored by the curriculum support co-ordinators, who provide reports to the curriculum manager about their activities. All staff have a schedule of graded classroom observations, and the proportion of staff observed in the current year is considerably greater than the previous year. Reports are produced with actions indicated for the tutor, manager and head of centre as required. Grades are moderated, and where these are poor, further observations are carried out and mentor support is given. **Leadership and management are good.** The curriculum manager and the small curriculum team have regular meetings and informal contact. Tutors contribute to the self-assessment report. All staff have a background in languages. **However, good practice is not shared sufficiently among staff.**

66. Despite the efforts made to recruit learners to literacy and numeracy courses, **the literacy and numeracy provision does not fully meet the needs of the residents.** To widen participation, three classes were started to serve specific communities. Learners with

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ESOL needs were attracted to two of them and the focus of the programmes was changed.

67. **HACE's ESOL provision has been well developed to widen participation.** Courses take place at a wide range of venues including the six main centres and 17 outreach venues. Crèche facilities are offered free of charge for the children of learners attending 21 classes. These courses are scheduled to enable learners with childcare responsibilities to attend during school hours. Some classes are attended only by women.

68. **The family learning provision works particularly effectively with a range of agencies** to develop a complementary and responsive provision to meet the needs of the whole community. Managers are active in a number of local, regional and national forums, including the west London family learning action group, Hounslow family learning strategy, and residents' and community associations. The borough's family and community team is a key partner in liaising with schools and providing the tutors for the FLLN programme.

69. In family learning, participation is good by learners from minority ethnic groups, and there is good representation of the borough's diverse community in relation to nationality, race, religion and language. However, men are under-represented, and during inspection, only one man was present in the classes observed. **HACE does not use its equality of opportunity information sufficiently to identify trends in recruitment and retention.**

70. **HACE has very good internal communications.** Learners, staff, managers and elected council members have a good understanding of the ways HACE operates. Staff understand its priorities and feel that communications and consultation with senior managers are good. HACE's principal and vice principal are very well known to staff and are frequent visitors to main and community venues.

71. **HACE's strategic direction is clearly articulated in a mission statement and eight supporting values statements.** These are successfully communicated to managers and staff and are well understood. The mission statement and supporting statements are derived from local authority priorities, and have direct connections with the Hounslow executive business plan, the Hounslow community plan, and the lifelong learning, leisure and cultural services departmental business plan.

72. **Managers receive good formal and informal development and support.** All new senior managers are provided with a management coaching programme. All tutors are supported in pursuing teaching qualifications during their first two years of service, and there is a wide range of drop-in and organised workshops for tutors on relevant topics. Learning support staff are provided with level 2 training and encouraged to progress to level 3. **A good range of training has been given to administrative staff,** including data collection, ICT use, equal opportunities and diversity training. **All staff also have an annual entitlement of 60 hours of free courses for personal development.**

73. **HACE's employer engagement initiatives are not complete.** The provider does not

have sufficient initiatives to provide for the literacy and numeracy needs of the workforce. Recently, HACE has begun a successful provision for the council's own employees at a number of sites.

74. In venues where HACE is not the main occupant, the accommodation is sometimes inadequate. In some of the classrooms used for family learning, the tables and chairs are too small for adults, and in some venues, classes are disrupted by other site users. Some rooms have unsatisfactory facilities, for instance one hairdressing class is carried out in a carpeted room, and some arts classes are delivered in rooms without a water supply. **Some of the resources in health and social care are inadequate.** Specialist resources for early years courses are inadequate and the teaching aids for anatomy, physiology and complementary therapy courses are poor. Some of the accommodation is inadequate.

75. HACE's widening participation activities are particularly successful in encouraging learners who would not normally enrol for adult education. Participation by learners from minority ethnic groups is good. Almost 50 per cent of all learners originate from these groups, compared with a proportion within the borough of 35 per cent.

76. The well-planned free childcare support is an important factor in attracting and retaining many learners. A significant number of learners who speak English as an additional language are women with children. The classes provided by HACE are often the only contact they have with members of other minority groups.

77. The provider has established a pool of learning support assistants who have a good range of skills and expertise. These assistants have received training in disability awareness and specific impairments, some have teaching, counselling or other relevant qualifications and experience.

78. HACE has good quality improvement arrangements. The most recent quality improvement framework was updated in September 2004 and provides a comprehensive approach to quality improvement. The framework clearly describes the quality standards and activities, including documents, progress reviews and planning, observations and tutor reviews, learners' feedback and copies of relevant forms and templates.

79. The self-assessment process is comprehensive and self-critical. Evaluative information is collected throughout the year by the quality improvement board using learner satisfaction surveys, information from teaching observations, the views of the learners' forum and correspondence from learners. Teaching and support staff have good awareness of the key points of the report and the relevant parts of the resulting action plan. The latest self-assessment report identified many of the strengths and some of the weaknesses identified during the inspection.

80. Some quality improvement arrangements are not fully established. Lesson planning and scheme of work forms are now used throughout HACE. In some areas they are used very effectively to support improvements in teaching and learning, but there are some instances of tutors not using the process appropriately to plan learning.

Leadership and management

Strengths

- good strategic planning
- very good internal communications
- particularly effective external partnerships
- good staff development
- particularly effective widening participation activities
- very good planning for learners' additional support needs
- well-designed quality improvement arrangements

Weaknesses

- incomplete employer engagement initiatives
- insufficient appropriate accommodation
- insufficient use of equality of opportunity data to improve performance
- insufficiently established quality improvement arrangements

Business administration, management & professional

Other contributory areas

Strengths

- good retention and achievement rates on most courses
- well-structured course provision to meet community needs
- good support for tutors

Weaknesses

- low retention and achievement rate on level 4 teaching certificate in 2003-04
- poor-quality learning resources in some areas
- incomplete systems to meet individual learners' needs

Information & communications technology

Using IT

Strengths

- good achievement and retention rates for all courses
- particularly effective teaching to encourage independent learning
- particularly good resources to support learning
- very good range of courses to meet wider community needs
- good individual support for learners
- outstanding curriculum leadership

Weaknesses

- no significant weaknesses identified

Hospitality, sport, leisure & travel

Leisure, sport and recreation

Strengths

- good additional health and social benefits for learners
- good attention to individual learners' needs during lessons

Weaknesses

- poor accommodation in some areas
- ineffective use of individual learning plans

Hairdressing & beauty therapy

Other contributory areas

Strengths

- good retention and achievement rates
- good development of practical hairdressing skills
- good support for learners
- very good resources to widen participation and develop career opportunities

Weaknesses

- inappropriate accommodation for some hairdressing courses
- ineffective monitoring and assessment of learners' progress
- ineffective curriculum planning for early implementation of vocational provision in beauty therapy

Health, social care & public services

Early years

Strengths

- good progression to higher-level courses and to related employment
- very good standards of teaching and learning
- responsive programme meeting community and learner needs
- good curriculum management

Weaknesses

- inadequate resources in some areas

Other contributory areas

Strengths

- good progression to higher-level courses and to related employment
- very good standards of teaching and learning
- responsive programme meeting community and learner needs
- good curriculum management

Weaknesses

- inadequate resources in some areas

Visual & performing arts & media

Arts

Strengths

- exceptionally good standards in learners' creative and technical skills
- particularly good and inventive teaching
- particularly thorough internal verification process
- good range of courses
- particularly effective curriculum leadership

Weaknesses

- ineffective individual learning plans

Music

Strengths

- very good range of individual and ensemble courses in music
- inspired teaching and good skills development in some keyboard, drumming and drama courses
- very good provision of supplementary learning materials
- extensive range of enrichment activities for music
- very good specialist teaching centre for music

Weaknesses

- incomplete quality improvement monitoring arrangements
- unsuitable accommodation in some areas

English, languages & communications

Languages

Strengths

- good development of learners' skills
- good standards of teaching
- good range of programmes to widen participation
- good leadership and management

Weaknesses

- ineffective initial advice and guidance for some learners
- insufficient sharing of good practice

Foundation programmes

ESOL

Strengths

- good attendance rates
- good achievement and retention rates
- good development of provision to widen participation

Weaknesses

- ineffective use of individual learning plans for some learners
- insufficient use of ICT in some classes

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Literacy and numeracy

Strengths

- much good teaching
- very effective quality improvement arrangements

Weaknesses

- insufficient response to individual learners' needs
- insufficient use of information technology (IT) in some classes
- low recruitment rate

Family learning

Strengths

- good practical skills development for children and adults
- much good teaching
- strong partnerships to secure accessible provision borough-wide
- very effective widening participation strategies to meet community needs

Weaknesses

- insufficient opportunities for accreditation
- inappropriate accommodation in some areas
- incomplete progress monitoring systems

WHAT LEARNERS LIKE ABOUT HOUNSLOW LEA:

- well-prepared tutors
- learning about the culture and customs of languages studied
- friendly and very helpful staff
- the variety of courses
- free childcare
- local centres

WHAT LEARNERS THINK HOUNSLOW LEA COULD IMPROVE:

- more detailed pre-course information
- classroom temperatures - some classrooms are too cold
- more Saturday classes
- progression opportunities throughout the summer

KEY CHALLENGES FOR HOUNSLOW LEA:

- develop workforce training initiatives throughout the borough
- continue to develop quality improvement arrangements
- continue to build upon the strength of existing partnerships
- improve the quality of some accommodation
- improve the quality of pre-course information for some courses

Language of the Adult and Community Learning Sector

Terminology varies across the range of education and training settings covered by the *Common Inspection Framework*. The table below indicates the terms appropriate to Adult and Community Learning

Single term used in the framework	Relating the term to Adult and Community Learning	
Provider	Provider	Any organisation providing opportunities for adults to meet personal or collective goals through the experience of learning. Providers include local authorities, specialist designated institutions, voluntary and community sector organisations, regeneration partnerships and further education colleges
Learner	Learner	Includes those learning by participating in community projects, as well as those on courses. Learning, however, will be planned, with intended outcomes.
Teacher / trainer	Tutor	Person teaching adult learners or guiding or facilitating their learning.
	Mentor	Person providing individual, additional support, guidance and advice to learners to help them achieve their learning goals.
Learning goals	Main learning goals	Intended gains in skills, knowledge or understanding. Gains may be reflected in the achievement of nationally recognised qualifications. Or they may be reflected in the ability of learners to apply learning in contexts outside the learning situation, e.g. in the family, community, or workplace. Learners' main goal/s should be recorded on an individual or, in some cases, group learning plan. Plans should be revised as progress is made and new goals emerge.
	Secondary learning goals	These may include planned-for gains in self-confidence, and inter-personal skills. These should also be included in learning plans where appropriate.
Personal and learning skills	Personal and learning skills	These include being able to study independently, willingness to collaborate with others, and readiness to take up another opportunity for education or training.

Other terms used in Adult and Community Learning

	Relating the term to Adult and Community Learning
Unanticipated, or unintended learning outcome	Adults often experience unanticipated gains as a result of being involved in learning. These include improved self-esteem, greater self-confidence and a growing sense of belonging to a community. Gains of this kind should be acknowledged and recorded in any record of achievement.
Subject-based programme	A programme organised around a body of knowledge, e.g. the structure and usage of the French language or ceramic glazing techniques. Students could be expected to progress from one aspect of the subject to another, to grasp increasingly complex concepts or analyses or to develop greater levels of skill or to apply skills to a new area of work.
Issue-based programme	A programme that is based on the concerns, interests and aspirations of particular groups, for example members of a Sikh Gurdwara wanting to address inter-faith relations in their town, or parents worried about the incidence of drug abuse in their locality. Issue-based learning tends to be associated with geographically defined communities, but the increasing use of electronic means of communication means that this need no longer be the case. Progress is defined in terms of the group's increasing ability to analyse its situation, to access new information and skills which will help it resolve its difficulties and generate solutions and its growing confidence in dealing with others to implement those solutions.
Outreach provision	Provision established in a community setting in addition to provision made at an organisation's main site(s). Outreach programmes may be similar to courses at the main site(s) or be designed to meet the specific requirements of that community.
Neighbourhood-based work	The provider's staff have a long-term presence in a local community with a specific remit to understand the concerns of the local residents and develop learning activities to meet local needs and interests.
Community regeneration	The process of improving the quality of life in communities by investing in their infrastructure and facilities, creating opportunities for training and employment and tackling poor health and educational under-achievement. Community regeneration requires the active participation of local residents in decision-making. Changes and improvements are often achieved either directly or indirectly as a result of the adult learning activities which arise from this.

Relating the term to Adult and Community Learning	
Community capacity building	The process of enabling local people to develop the knowledge, skills and confidence to take advantage of opportunities for employment, training and further education and to become selfmanaging, sustainable communities.
Active citizenship	The process whereby people recognise the power they have to improve the quality of life for others and make a conscious effort to do so: the process whereby people recognise the power of organisations and institutions to act in the interests of the common good and exercise their influence to ensure that they do so. Adult learning contributes to active citizenship.

DETAILED INSPECTION FINDINGS

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Grade 2

Strengths

- good strategic planning
- very good internal communications
- particularly effective external partnerships
- good staff development
- particularly effective widening participation activities
- very good planning for learners' additional support needs
- well-designed quality improvement arrangements

Weaknesses

- incomplete employer engagement initiatives
- insufficient appropriate accommodation
- insufficient use of equality of opportunity data to improve performance
- insufficiently established quality improvement arrangements

81. HACE's managers provide good strategic planning. Strategic direction is clearly expressed through a mission statement and eight supporting values statements which are understood by managers and staff. The mission and supporting statements are derived from the local authority's priorities, and have direct connections with the Hounslow executive business plan, the Hounslow community plan, and the lifelong learning, leisure and cultural service's departmental business plan. Curriculum and partnership strategies are well developed through HACE's three-year development plan, the yearly adult learning plan, and the annual business plan. Each document has a clear and realistic direction and priorities and is linked with the other documents. Each of the curriculum areas also has a clear annual plan, and all the curriculum areas are now linked to progression routes at higher levels. Operational targets and priorities drawn from the strategic planning process are shared with learners, partners and staff through a planned consultation and information programme. Those staff, middle and senior managers and elected members interviewed had good knowledge of HACE's strategic priorities.

82. Internal communications are good. Learners, staff, managers and elected council members have a good understanding of programme operations, they understand the priorities and feel that senior management communicates well with them. The principal and vice principal are very well known to staff and are frequent visitors to main and community venues. Curriculum managers meet fortnightly, and they alternate minuted management meetings with workshops about priorities for quality improvement. All managers in curriculum and administrative areas are members of one of HACE's advisory groups that provide feedback to the senior managers and support decision-making.

There are three termly, minuted tutor meetings each year. Learners' forums are well attended, and a communications strategy has established arrangements for learner consultation.

83. HACE maintains particularly effective external partnerships. The provider works closely with 70 partners, in the statutory, community, charitable and public sectors, and has close and effective links with a very broad range of groups. These links include a very good range of small local community and residents' groups, borough-wide organisations and education partners, national agencies, and neighbouring education authorities and adult education services. Members of partner organisations were able to identify clear benefits from their involvement with HACE. A new partnership forum was established in July 2004, to bring together all relevant organisations. Responses from partner organisations were very positive. An annual audit of partnership links is carried out to review each partnership. In line with borough priorities, HACE works particularly closely with Sure Start, the Hounslow family and community team and Hounslow Homes, and with the council's youth service and libraries.

84. Staff development is good. An effective and wide-ranging annual staff development plan is drawn up, outlining training and development for managers, tutors, administrative staff and learning support assistants. Managers receive good formal and informal development and support. All new senior managers, including curriculum managers, are provided with a management coaching programme. All tutors are supported in pursuing teaching qualifications during their first two years of service. There is a wide range of drop-in and organised workshops for tutors on relevant topics such as retention of learners, classroom management, individual learning plans, differentiated learning, planning course design, diversity, and e-learning. Learning support staff are provided with level 2 training and encouraged to progress to level 3. A useful termly training day is held for all support assistants on specific topics relevant to learner support. A good range of training has been provided for administrative staff. All HACE's staff have a good annual entitlement to 60 hours of courses for personal development, free of charge.

85. Management information systems are satisfactory. HACE has invested heavily in management information and data systems, and now all centres are networked to a live data reporting system. A senior information manager has been appointed recently. This manager and the senior finance and administration managers are supported by the small central team, which includes a marketing co-ordinator and a systems co-ordinator. Frequent and accurate reports of enrolments, and retention and achievement rates are now produced for managers.

86. Workforce training initiatives are incomplete. The borough has a low unemployment rate but a low-skilled workforce, and employers experience difficulties in recruiting for manager and administrator posts that require level 2 or higher qualifications. HACE does not have sufficient initiatives operating to provide for the literacy and numeracy needs of the workforce. Recently, HACE has begun successfully to work with the council's own employees at a number of sites, but this is on a small scale.

87. Some of the accommodation used for adult and community education classes is

inappropriate. A three-year service accommodation strategy sets out minimum standards for classrooms. Under these standards there is adequate provision for essential items such as chairs, tables, whiteboards, overhead projectors, clocks and décor. However, these standards only apply to rooms in which HACE is the primary user. In some of the classrooms used for family learning, the tables and chairs are too small for adults, and in some venues there are disruptions to classes from other site users. In other rooms, arrangements are unsatisfactory for the activities carried out. For example, some hairdressing classes operate in carpeted rooms, and some arts classes operate in rooms without a water supply. HACE has identified these problems in its three-year development plan.

Equality of opportunity

Contributory grade 2

88. HACE's widening participation activities are particularly successful in encouraging learners who would not normally enter adult education. Participation by learners from minority ethnic groups is good. Almost 50 per cent of all learners are from these groups, compared with a proportion of 35 per cent within the borough. HACE's good partnership work builds on the contacts made by community associations, the voluntary sector or other agencies such as housing management organisations. In one area a building was transformed into a community and learning centre through partnership work. HACE worked with a local community to paint, decorate and furnish the building. The centre now hosts a range of adult education classes including ESOL, keep fit, confidence building, crafts, hairdressing, and childcare and is also a learndirect centre. Another centre, based on an estate in the west of the borough, provides many learning opportunities for residents. Courses at the centre are over-subscribed and many learners have developed enough confidence to enrol on classes at other adult education centres.

89. Widening participation officers encourage the development of accredited community learning champions. Partners report that HACE is particularly responsive to the identified needs of local communities and will endeavour to provide tutors to run classes on request. In some cases the demand is greater than HACE can provide. Well-planned free childcare support is an important factor in attracting and retaining many learners to classes. Many learners who speak English as an additional language are women with children. The classes provided by HACE are often the only contact they have with members of other minority groups. Learners who are unable to use local IT facilities or are not confident enough to attend a formal class can use the community IT bus. This facility is highly valued by learners and is able to meet vocational and social needs and provides an introduction to ICT in a safe, positive environment.

90. Additional support for learners is well planned and effective. Although the additional support fund is small it is used efficiently and is well managed. The learning support co-ordinator publicises the available support effectively to tutors, potential and current learners and to organisations that refer learners to HACE. At enrolment and during induction, learners are given advice and guidance regarding support. When a learner requiring support is identified an interview is arranged and a learning support assistant is assigned to provide the relevant support. HACE has a pool of learning support assistants with a good range of skills and expertise. They have received training in disability

awareness and specific impairments, and some have teaching, counselling or other relevant qualifications and experience. A successful collaboration with a day centre has enabled many learners with learning difficulties to attend classes in addition to their specialist programmes. All learning support assistants receive formal guidance about their role, but do not receive formal guidance about the protection of vulnerable adults.

91. HACE has policies and procedures to meet legislative requirements. The diversity advisory group, which is chaired by the principal, monitors and audits the promotion and implementation of equality and diversity. The group receives advice from specialist organisations and has commissioned an impact analysis on the management of equality of opportunity. The analysis provided valuable guidance for the service and acknowledged the progress made. Staff attend equality and diversity training and are offered training in other relevant areas. The training for the learning support team is particularly successful, and many tutors also attend these sessions.

92. Access to accommodation managed by HACE is satisfactory. An accessibility audit identified where adjustments were necessary to meet the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995. One centre is particularly accessible, having lift access and good colour contrasting throughout the building for visually impaired learners. Where areas within centres are inaccessible, alternative arrangements are made to accommodate learners.

93. HACE now collects detailed data about learners and categorises them according to gender, age, ethnicity, widening participation grouping, disability or learning difficulty. The diversity statistics are analysed and compared with the borough population profile. Data is sent to curriculum managers for further analysis and comparison, but at present, HACE does not use the information to identify trends in achievement and retention of different groupings, nor does it analyse learner evaluations according to learning groups.

Quality assurance

Contributory grade 2

94. HACE has good quality improvement arrangements. The most recent quality improvement framework was updated in September 2004 and provides a comprehensive approach to quality improvement. The framework clearly describes the quality standards and activities, including documents, reviews and planning, observations and tutor reviews, learners' feedback, and copies of relevant forms and templates. The provider regularly revised many documents during the implementation phase of the quality framework and is now concentrating on ensuring that all staff are familiar with the documents and understand the processes.

95. HACE is committed to a policy of continuous review and improvement in its standards of teaching and learning and has developed systems to support this commitment. The tutor observation programme is well organised. All new tutors are observed in their first term and HACE has a target of 50 per cent of established tutors observed each year. This target was exceeded in all curriculum areas. Observers are trained appropriately, and observations are carried out either by the principal team and curriculum managers. Some observations are carried out by two observers to ensure

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consistency. Observation grades are moderated by the quality improvement board and staff development needs are identified. Following observations, staff receive formal feedback and, where necessary, are given practical advice to improve teaching and learning. Staff report that the observation process gives them greater awareness of the achievements of their learners. Inexperienced tutors, or those who have development needs identified, are often encouraged to observe successful colleagues. Forms and procedures to support learning are standardised with all tutors using the agreed scheme of work and lesson planning templates.

96. The self-assessment process is comprehensive and self-critical. Evaluative information is collected throughout the year by the quality improvement board using learner satisfaction surveys, information from teaching observations, the views of the learner forum and correspondence from learners. The quality improvement board produces a first draft with an action plan that is then shared with centre and curriculum managers who propose amendments and additions. All staff receive a copy of their relevant area report and the leadership and management report and have the opportunity to comment. The modified draft is sent to the LSC and an experienced consultant, for further comment before the final version is released. Teaching and support staff have good awareness of the key points of the report and the relevant parts of the action plan. The most recent self-assessment report identified many of the strengths and some weaknesses identified during the inspection.

97. Learners' evaluations are encouraged and used well. Learners complete an initial questionnaire and an exit survey at the end of their programmes of learning, which provide useful qualitative and quantitative data. The results are collated at each centre and then sent to relevant curriculum managers and the quality improvement board for analysis. Senior managers respond to comments where necessary or request reports on action taken by other managers. Learners' forums were introduced in 2002 as an informal method of obtaining less directed feedback. These forums have developed into more consultative bodies. Learners talk positively about being involved in the forums and believe that their opinions are taken into consideration and acted upon.

98. Internal verification systems are satisfactory. In some areas clear suggestions for improvements are recorded and acted upon. Verification takes place at planned intervals with appropriate levels of sampling and feedback to learners and assessors.

99. Some quality improvement arrangements not fully established. Lesson planning and scheme of work forms are now used throughout the service. There are, however, some instances of tutors not using the process appropriately to plan learning. The lesson observation programme has emphasised the importance of planning and monitoring learning and is successful in encouraging tutors to use the system. On the best courses tutors explain the purpose of individual learning plans, negotiate group targets and encourage learners to develop their own goals within the course. Some learners, however, are not advised how to make best use of their learning plans or shown how the plans will support their development. Some learners have insufficient involvement with their plans after their initial inductions.

100. Current arrangements do not ensure that good practice is shared throughout the borough. Inspectors identified several examples of successful practice that other tutors within the relevant curriculum were unaware of. Although good practice is discussed at all team meetings, some teaching staff still have insufficient opportunities to formally share good practice with their colleagues.

AREAS OF LEARNING

Business administration, management & professional

Business administration, management & professional		3
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Other contributory areas - Adult and community learning	490	3

Other contributory areas

Strengths

- good retention and achievement rates on most courses
- well-structured course provision to meet community needs
- good support for tutors

Weaknesses

- low retention and achievement rate on level 4 teaching certificate in 2003-04
- poor-quality learning resources in some areas
- incomplete systems to meet individual learners' needs

Achievement and standards

101. The retention and achievement rates for classroom and teaching assistants' courses are good. Of the 163 enrolments in 2003-04, 80 per cent remained on programme and 82 per cent of those achieved their level 1 or 2 qualifications. Seventy-five per cent of the 230 learners enrolled in 2002-03 remained on programme, with 87 per cent achieving their qualification. Retention and achievement rates for accredited accounts courses are good. For the year 2003-04, 79 per cent of the 288 learners who enrolled on level 1 and 2 courses remained on programme, which equalled the retention rate for 2002-03. Of those retained, 75 per cent achieved their qualifications, 6 per cent less than in 2002-03. At the time of inspection, 89 per cent of learners who began are still on programme.

102. Retention and achievement rates for the level 4 teaching certificate were low in 2003-04. Of the 46 enrolments, only 67 per cent remained on programme, of whom only 61 per cent achieved their qualification. Changes have now been made to the timetabling and delivery of the programme. Of the 14 learners who enrolled on the programme for 2004-05, all have been retained. Retention rates on the non-accredited level 3 accounting course are satisfactory, with 71 per cent of the 31 learners enrolled in 2003-04 remaining on programme.

103. Learners throughout the range of courses develop in confidence as they study for

their qualifications, taking pride in their work. Learners' work is neat and well produced. Some learners recognise development in their analytical skills and are achieving at levels beyond their expectations. Attendance rates are satisfactory.

Quality of education and training

104. The standard of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Of the lessons observed, 43 per cent were good or better. In the better lessons, learners' understanding is checked regularly, they use problem solving and note-taking skills, remain motivated and demonstrate confidence by participating in discussions. Tutors share the lesson objectives with the learners. Good progress is made by learners towards their qualifications, they understand the stage they have reached and are able to work independently, with support when required. Learners benefit from group and pair work and tutors evaluate the effectiveness of sessions and identify areas for improvement. However, questions are mainly non-directed and there is occasional leading by the tutor. Those lessons graded satisfactory are mainly tutor-led, and the learners are passive for lengthy periods of time. Changes in activities or variations to support individuals' preferred learning styles are minimal. Questions are less frequent and non-directed, making it difficult to monitor progress and check individuals' learning. In some classes, over-dominance by some learners prevents all learners interacting and participating. In a few cases, interruptions by the tutor restricted the flow of learners' ideas. However, most sessions start promptly and are well planned, although lesson planning does not identify ongoing and individual learning checks, and learning outcomes are vague.

105. Resources are not varied sufficiently to enhance learners' experience. Too much emphasis is placed on paper-based materials to support teaching and learning. Overhead projectors are seldom used and in the only lesson where a data projector and interactive whiteboard were available, the equipment was used only as a projector screen. Learners on the professional courses can borrow books for the duration of their courses, although no textbooks were used by learners in lessons during the inspection. Video tapes are used only rarely and tutors working at outreach centres find it difficult to access the specialist resources and the equipment needed to use the resource. Where plans identify specialist resources, in some cases learners are months into their courses before the specialist resource is used. Many course details and materials are wordy, with very few pictures even for learners who have identified language needs. Some learning materials do not promote classes diversity sufficiently. Where exercises and cases studies are used, most feature western European names, yet when writing, learners generally make use of names which feature prominently within their own cultures. Some of the rooms at outreach centres are cramped and a few are cold. HACE recognises that it has a shortage of specialist tutors to provide sickness cover. At least five classes have been cancelled or postponed.

106. The monitoring of learners' progress is satisfactory. Tutors record learners' achievements on progress sheets which are updated against learning outcomes. Some records do not identify the dates of achievement and there are no projected achievement dates. All learners have an individual learning plan, although these are generally kept and

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updated by the tutor. The allocation of an individual learning plan for every learner is particularly unusual in adult community education, but they are not yet fully developed as working documents. Some tutors use additional monitoring documents to identify attendance against learning objectives, to enable learners who miss lessons to catch up. On one professional course, learners carry out a self-assessment of their prior skills and experiences, but these are only reviewed at the end of the course.

107. Assessment is satisfactory. Work is marked promptly, and, where provided, feedback sheets contain detailed feedback and identify any areas for improvement. However, where actions are proposed they are not always time bound. On courses that are internally verified, this is carried out during and at the end of the programme. Where tutors are new, verification activities include additional checks of assessment decisions and audits of assessment records.

108. The provision is well structured to meet community needs. For instance, the service set up a level 3 non-accredited course in accounts to meet the specific requirements of employed learners. The times and locations of most sessions are arranged to fit in around childcare arrangements. A Saturday course in level 2 computerised accounts responded to the needs of employed learners, and amendments were made to locations and times of courses to suit the group. There is a drop-in facility at some centres for learners to have additional practice on computers.

109. HACE's systems to ensure that individual learners' needs are met, including their language, literacy and numeracy needs, are not fully developed. Some tutors are not fully aware of the specialist support available for learners, and other tutors are unsure how to access support when learners identify potential obstacles to their ability to complete the programme. There is no formal system for identifying learners' numeracy needs on book-keeping and computerised accounts courses. Learners on some courses, however, have frequent scheduled tutorials, either as a group or on an individual basis. In some cases, tutorials do not provide the learners with written feedback or action plans for improvement.

Leadership and management

110. Tutors are well supported. HACE has done much to resolve the weakness of this area identified in the self-assessment report. New tutors have mentors, individual support and guidance in using paperwork and systems. Tutors feel well supported and not isolated and are kept well informed through e-mails and team meetings. Where tutors are not able to attend meetings they are given the minutes of those meetings. There are frequent drop-in sessions throughout the borough for tutors to gain additional skills in, for example, ICT and lesson planning. However, not all tutors are aware of this facility. Tutors are involved in the self-assessment process and are sent draft copies of the report for comments. All tutors use a standard course file as part of the quality improvement system. All tutors can access a good range of staff development activities. For example, all tutors can select any course offered by HACE for up to 60 hours' duration. In addition, tutors who are not yet qualified can acquire teaching qualifications.

111. Quality improvement is satisfactory. HACE has standard documents which support tutors in the implementation of the quality improvement system. Regular audits of tutors' files provide feedback for improvements. Additional monitoring is provided for new tutors. Curriculum managers have access to the management information system on their computers in order to monitor retention and achievement more closely. Tutors carry out reviews of their courses in order to make improvements. Although not all courses are designated to be reviewed annually, additional course reviews are carried out where the tutor is new. Tutors are observed by managers and subject specialists and the grades given were similar to those given by inspectors. Actions for improvement are identified on observation reports, although these are not time bound.

112. Lesson plans and individual learning plans are not designed for the planning of differentiated time-bound targets, and registers are not regularly updated with those learners who leave before completing their courses and non-starters. The self-assessment report for the area recognised many of the strengths and some of the weaknesses identified by inspectors.

Information & communications technology

Information & communications technology		1
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Using IT - Adult and community learning	577	1

Using IT

Strengths

- good achievement and retention rates for all courses
- particularly effective teaching to encourage independent learning
- particularly good resources to support learning
- very good range of courses to meet wider community needs
- good individual support for learners
- outstanding curriculum leadership

Weaknesses

- no significant weaknesses identified

Achievement and standards

113. Achievement and retention rates for all courses are good. In 2003-04, of the 2,619 learners who started an ICT course, over 85 per cent were retained and over 70 per cent achieved their intended outcomes. In 2004-05, of the 1,134 learners who have started courses, nearly 85 per cent have been retained and over 75 per cent have already achieved their expected outcomes. All learners on courses have satisfactory skills and knowledge and most learners on presentation and graphics courses have very good skills and produce high standards of work. Learners on the website design course and basic design courses have good knowledge and understanding and are able to identify and solve complex problems. Learners new to computing have good mouse control skills and use the keyboard with confidence. Attendance at the lessons observed by inspectors was good, at 84 per cent. Many learners progress from introductory entry level courses to externally accredited courses at level 1 and 2. Some learners now use their skills for the benefit of their community. Learners work in local schools and use their ICT skills in the classroom with pupils and to maintain networks.

Quality of education and training

114. Teaching is particularly effective and encourages independent learning. Over 65 per cent of the lessons observed were good or better. There were no unsatisfactory lessons. In the better lessons, tutors have very good classroom management skills.

Tutors plan their lessons well, with clear aims and objectives which they share with the learners at the start of the lesson. Tutors use a variety of teaching and learning methods. Good use is made of demonstrations to large and small groups and tutors use data projectors effectively to show learners step-by-step actions. Learners are skilfully encouraged to develop their skills and knowledge outside classes, for instance by giving them information about, or by arranging visits to, local internet cafes and other accessible venues. Tutors make very good use of oral questioning to check learners' understanding and offer very good individual coaching. Learners are given confidence to experiment with software applications. Tutors are enthusiastic about their subject and motivate and inspire learners, often giving additional background information.

115. HACE has particularly good resources to support learning. Most venues have very good physical resources. Many classrooms have flat screen monitors and slim tower units. All classrooms have industry standard, height-adjustable office chairs and some classrooms have recently been refurbished to a very good standard, providing an excellent environment for learners. Data projectors are available and used in almost all venues. Some classrooms have interactive whiteboards. HACE has a programme for renewal of hardware and site upgrades, including broadband for internet access. Prompt action is taken to solve any health and safety problems. Learners use relevant, current software in lessons and in the best lessons a very good range of exercises is available, suitable for learners at all levels. Current reference books are provided for learners on entry level and level 1 courses. In one lesson, learners used an excellent, innovative simulation programme for uploading files to websites. The programme was devised by the tutor and allows learners to practise uploading files to websites, providing tutorial support and guidance where necessary. All classrooms are adequately ventilated and heated.

116. All tutors have teaching qualifications and most have up-to-date, relevant ICT qualifications. All tutors have good or very good subject knowledge and some have current, relevant industrial and commercial experience. A particularly good range of specialist resources is available for learners with disabilities, including voice recognition software, larger keyboards, and specialist screen enhancer software. In some lessons, there is not enough space for learners to work from handouts or worksheets and there are no page holders.

117. HACE has a very good range of programmes to meet the wider needs of the community. The range includes an introductory computer literacy course, an examination-based qualification in information technology, and a very wide range of community ICT courses. The ICT provision is very responsive to local needs, and ranges from courses targeted at specific groups to bite-sized and taster courses to encourage people returning to education to enrol on qualification programmes. The programmes are available at many outreach centres and provide a service that is highly valued by learners as meeting their vocational and social needs. The programme for extending community provision makes an important contribution to the borough's widening participation strategy. Courses are offered at times to suit parents with young children and crèche facilities are available at most learning centres. HACE works well in collaboration and partnership with community groups to offer funded projects in the

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community. Such projects include a mobile bus fitted with computer workstations with internet access, and a number of learning centres located in deprived areas. The focus has been on entry level and level 1 courses to meet the needs of the community, but the range and quantity of level 2 and level 3 programmes are being increased rapidly.

118. Learners are given good individual support. Course outlines are available at learning centres and give information on course and progression opportunities. All learners are given guidance by their tutors towards the end of their courses, about suitable progression opportunities. Charts showing progression routes are clearly displayed on classroom walls.

119. Learners receive motivational guidance and support in lessons from their tutors. One group of learners learning how to use the internet and e-mail were taken as a group to a local internet café to increase their confidence in using such facilities. All learners spoke enthusiastically of the benefits they gained from this activity. Individual learning plans are used to record learners' progress. Additional support is good and is widely available throughout the borough. Additional literacy or numeracy support is available, and sources of support for learners' language needs are clearly signposted by tutors. Crèche and childcare facilities have enabled learners to participate who would not otherwise have been able to do so.

120. Pastoral support is good. Tutors are aware of, and sensitive to, individual needs. For example, one recently bereaved learner was given support to continue learning. Learners who do not attend two consecutive lessons are contacted by their tutors using a postcard system, which gives details of the content of the classes they have missed and encourages them to return. Learners value this contact and one learner said this encouraged them to return after being absent to look after a sick relative.

121. Well-planned drop-in lessons for learners give opportunities for them to practise their skills and maintain momentum on their courses. The tutors for these lessons liaise with the learners' course tutors to ensure that the guidance is relevant and fully supportive. These lessons are valued by learners.

122. Initial advice and guidance and initial assessment are satisfactory. Learners complete a prior learning form to identify previous learning experiences, including ICT. This is used in the preparation of their individual learning plans. Support needs are identified at enrolment and include learning and disability support if requested by the learner. In many instances personal learning goals are negotiated. If the tutor and learner agree that the course is not suitable, other learning opportunities are identified. Learners' progress is regularly assessed and recorded on individual learning plans and progress sheets.

123. Assessment of learners' work is satisfactory, though in some cases it is good or very good. Learners receive good verbal formative assessments, particularly during individual progress reviews. Written work is marked with comments about the quality of the work. In many instances, however, the feedback does not include information to help the learner improve their work standards. At the end of each ICT course, learners'

assignments are assessed by the tutor and internally verified by the senior tutor.

124. Internal verification of internally and externally accredited courses is satisfactory. The process follows HACE guidelines and assures the quality of the tutors' assessments. Internal verification is carried out by internal verifiers appointed within the ICT area of learning, and accredited courses are externally verified by the awarding body.

Leadership and management

125. HACE has a clear strategic direction which is understood by the highly motivated staff throughout the ICT provision. A shared, very positive ethos focuses on widening participation and improving the quality of teaching and learning. This ethos has been developed from motivational team-building activities. HACE has strong links with the community and partnership projects such as the ICT bus. Learning centres within the community are highly valued by learners. The partnership programme is well understood by staff within the ICT provision.

126. The management of resources is very good. The operational status of resources in all venues is recorded, and any issues are quickly resolved. Health and safety in all venues, including those not owned by HACE, is of a good standard and is frequently monitored. In one instance where inappropriate chairs were used in a partnership venue, HACE swiftly provided appropriate replacement chairs. Management is very good for a wide range of specialist resources for learners with disabilities. HACE has a good strategy for developing e-learning with partners throughout the provision. It is extremely well planned and managed. Its aims include clear strategies for staff development in order to establish the use of ICT throughout HACE.

127. The curriculum is very well managed. Curriculum documents are well planned and accessible, and the well-constructed course files are used by all tutors throughout the provision. Individual learning plans and progress records are completed for all learners and contribute to the high standard of learners' progress. Lesson plans and schemes of work are comprehensive and are regularly monitored to ensure that quality standards are maintained. Communications are excellent at all levels and there is a particularly good system for messages to and from tutors in outreach venues, using a message sheet on the front of course files, as well as e-mails and memorandums. Tutors are well supported by senior tutors who provide appropriate guidance and support which is highly valued, particularly by the tutors in outreach centres. Where appropriate, support is provided for tutors by mentors and shadowing. Continuing reviews of data collation, analyses and outcomes contributes to improvements in all aspects of the curriculum.

128. Learning centres provide a well-managed, safe and non-threatening environment. A wide range of learners from minority ethnic groups who between them speak many different languages, works harmoniously together within the learning centres. Many courses are designed to meet the needs of disadvantaged learners, and where a need is identified, then additional support is made available.

129. The area self-assessment report is thorough and matched inspectors' findings. The

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process for development of the self-assessment report included contributions and reviews from all staff within the ICT provision. There is a comprehensive and thorough lesson observation programme. It is well documented and moderated, and clear and effective action plans enable tutors to improve. This is linked with the comprehensive learning plan. Regular curriculum area staff meetings take place which include discussions of specific training objectives. In each meeting there are opportunities for tutors to share good practice.

Hospitality, sport, leisure & travel

Hospitality, sport, leisure & travel		3
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
<i>Leisure, sport and recreation</i> - Adult and community learning	965	3

Leisure, sport and recreation

Strengths

- good additional health and social benefits for learners
- good attention to individual learners' needs during lessons

Weaknesses

- poor accommodation in some areas
- ineffective use of individual learning plans

Achievement and standards

130. Learners can identify the good health and social benefits gained from these programmes. In sports classes they are able to maintain and improve their levels of fitness, mobility, flexibility and balance. Many learners identify benefits which include gaining relief from medical conditions such as joint stiffness and back pain, as well as stress relief and the ability to relax, and overcoming the effects of illness and injury. Many learners develop good techniques in exercises in relation to their ailments and abilities. A significant number of learners also state that the social gains are particularly important. Learners are able to apply their learning effectively in their everyday lives.

131. In 2003-04, 27 level 1 certificates in football coaching and 96 foundation food hygiene certificates were achieved. In the current academic year, 38 level 1 certificates in football coaching and 25 foundation food hygiene certificates have been achieved so far. In hospitality, in 2003-04, 15 cake icing and 31 sugar-paste cake decorating certificates were achieved. In 2004-05, 11 sugar-paste cake decorating certificates have been awarded to date. The achievement levels on two hospitality courses declined slightly during 2003-04. However, a new level 2 qualification course is currently in operation, though at the time of inspection no one had completed the course.

132. Attendance levels are satisfactory. A card-based system is used to check on learners who have not attended lessons for two weeks. A good system is used to record learners' absences. The course retention rate is satisfactory.

Quality of education and training

133. Standards of teaching and learning are satisfactory. Of the lessons observed at inspection all were satisfactory or better. Lesson planning is satisfactory in most lessons. Learners receive guidance and, when necessary, are given alternative exercises to meet their individual needs and abilities. For example, exercises are adapted for learners who are pregnant, vulnerable, or have back problems or arthritis. Tutors give good demonstrations in most sessions.

134. Learners receive satisfactory support for their literacy, numeracy or language needs. If tutors identify support needs for learners they usually deal with them very well in class. Learners with identified needs are able to join literacy, numeracy or ESOL classes offered in addition to their main courses.

135. Some of the accommodation is poor. Risk assessments have been carried out on all venues used, but venues have not been risk-assessed for each specific activity. For example, one venue is suitable for most classes, but a class for learners with back problems is unsuitable for this venue as learners are required to move large exercise mats. At some venues, learning is adversely affected by insufficient heating and ventilation and extraneous noise. This was particularly noticeable during the relaxation period of some sessions. Some venues have problems with cleanliness, especially at the end of a school day. Adequate space is provided for activities such as yoga and tai chi. However, equipment such as tables and chairs is stacked at the sides of rooms. This equipment often has to be moved by learners so that particular exercises can be performed.

136. Individual learning plans are ineffective. Learners' goals are not identified sufficiently at the beginning of programmes. Many learners do not formally identify their individual goals or state their reasons for attending sessions. Where goals are identified they are recorded on the individual learning plans but are often not specific or measurable. Tutors' use of individual learning plans varies. Some tutors use the plan to record learners' progress during the course, but others do not. The initial assessments of learners' ability are inadequate and often not recorded on individual learning plans. Health screening is carried out, and all learners complete a standard written health screening form which allows tutors to assess their readiness for exercise. This allows tutors to adapt exercises for learners who have medical problems. Most tutors do not carry out verbal checks of learners' health at the beginning of each session. Individual learning plans have generic learning aims which are the same for all learners, regardless of ability. These aims are not revisited on a regular basis during the course to check on the progress made by each learner. Some learners do not receive regular feedback about their performance or fitness. Tutors use record of progress sheets to monitor learners' progress, but these are poorly recorded and have insufficient detail.

Leadership and management

137. Managers are responsive to learners' feedback and try to provide appropriate courses. Satisfactory progression routes are available to learners, as in beginners' and improvers' yoga and Pilates, and football coaching at level 1 and 2. Managers are also attempting to provide a wider range of accredited courses. Managers and tutors are attentive to individual learners' needs. In some community venues a crèche has been provided free of charge, making it easier for learners to attend sessions. The range of venues and courses meets the special needs of learners. For example, courses are held at the Asian women's centre, residential and community halls. Courses are provided for specific ailments, such as back pain and arthritis.

138. There is a lesson observations system in place. In the current year, 74 per cent of tutors have been observed. Tutors are given verbal and written feedback and an action plan, if appropriate, to improve their teaching. This is monitored to ensure that actions are carried out by agreed dates. Sports tutors have been trained to complete lesson observations and provide specific feedback. All tutors are appropriately qualified. The curriculum manager has a small budget for continuing professional development. Tutors can make requests for help with some courses.

139. Quality assurance is satisfactory. A wide range of procedures has been implemented, for example course evaluations, tutor evaluations, learner exit surveys, individual learning plans and non-attendance cards. Tutors have been trained in the use of these forms. Their use is still inconsistent but improving. It is mandatory that these procedures are used by tutors. Tutors must use standard forms for schemes of work and lesson plans. Most tutors complete these satisfactorily. Good practice is not shared among tutors. Tutors' meetings have been implemented on a termly basis, and although attendance at these meetings has been poor, it is now improving. Generally the self-assessment report identified most of the strengths and weaknesses found by inspectors.

Hairdressing & beauty therapy

Hairdressing & beauty therapy		3
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Other contributory areas - Adult and community learning	301	3

Other contributory areas*Strengths*

- good retention and achievement rates
- good development of practical hairdressing skills
- good support for learners
- very good resources to widen participation and develop career opportunities

Weaknesses

- inappropriate accommodation for some hairdressing courses
- ineffective monitoring and assessment of learners' progress
- ineffective curriculum planning for early implementation of vocational provision in beauty therapy

Achievement and standards

140. Retention and achievement rates are good for all courses. Retention is improving on accredited courses, from 66 per cent in 2003-04, to 76 per cent in 2003-04. On all courses, the combined retention rate has risen from 71 per cent in 2002-03, to 77 per cent in 2003-04. The achievement rate for accredited courses has declined slightly from 87 per cent in 2002-03, to 84 per cent in 2003-04, but remains good. The achievement rates for non-accredited and accredited provision overall have risen from 74 per cent in 2002-03, to 90 per cent in 2003-04.

141. Learners develop good hairdressing skills, and the standard of practical hairdressing skills is good on all courses. Learners are supported effectively by tutors in maintaining a record of practical work using photographs and descriptions of their activities. Photographs are taken in class before, during and after each significant practical exercise or activity and learners are able to clearly describe the techniques used. Many learners have progressed from the level 1 courses to level 2. Four of the 10 learners from the level 1 OCN course in 2003-04 have progressed to level 2 NVQ courses at the local college. Two of the current learners have been able to secure part-time jobs in local salons to extend their skills and develop practical experience. One learner in the level 1 OCN class has been offered a job with further training.

142. The attendance of observed classes was satisfactory, at 73 per cent of possible

attendance. The accredited provision attendance rate is 71 per cent, which is lower than non-accredited provision at 76 per cent. The standard of written work in portfolios is satisfactory.

Quality of education and training

143. Tutors provide good personal support to develop learners' confidence, especially on courses serving minority ethnic groups. Learners in Indian bridal make-up developed a range of basic make-up and long hair styling skills during the 10-week course. In one outreach centre, learners developed confidence in their personal appearance through taking an Asian make-up course. Learners in hairdressing have received a range of support, and tutors have worked effectively to develop learners' practical skills and build their confidence. Tutors recommend support from specialists within the service for learners experiencing difficulties with literacy, numeracy and language skills. Small class sizes also enable tutors to give additional support to learners where necessary. In one class a tutor had set aside regular, additional time for ESOL learners to evaluate their lesson plans. Learners value the support they receive and report that the teaching in their classes helps them to develop their confidence. The individual learning plans in tutors' files show good records of the identification and provision of additional support for learners.

144. HACE has developed very good resources to widen participation and develop career opportunities in beauty therapy. The professional training suite in the Brentford learning centre is a particularly good resource and is very well equipped with high-quality beauty couches, trolleys and well-equipped manicure stations. The room has good lighting, is bright and very well furnished. The needs of learners and clients with mobility difficulties are well provided for by a chair lift and a wide range of adaptations to the building and facilities. The room provides a realistic, professional working environment, which enables learners to progress from non-accredited courses to accredited courses.

145. Teaching is satisfactory on all courses. Learners' diverse needs and existing skills are identified, and tutors adopt a suitable range of inclusive teaching methods. Schemes of work and lesson plans are used more effectively in some classes than others, but tutors generally plan and review their sessions carefully.

146. The accommodation for hairdressing in the Longford learning centre is unsuitable for some teaching and learning activities. The floor is carpeted and there are not enough resources for washing and dressing hair. Learners cannot ensure that cut hair is safely and thoroughly removed from the floor after practical activities. The room is too small and does not provide enough space for the development of practical skills. In the class observed, nine learners were working with four clients around chairs and desks. HACE's managers are aware of this weakness and at the time of inspection were planning to move to alternative accommodation.

147. The monitoring and assessment of learners' progress is ineffective. Tutors keep records of progress on a chart which indicates completion of units and outcomes for

each learner. In hairdressing, tutors produce sheets with comments about each learner's progress. However, there is no evidence of evaluative feedback to learners, and monitoring sheets do not give learners guidance about how to improve. The monitoring sheets have a section for learners' feedback and signatures, but this section had not been completed on any of the forms. Feedback to assessors does not contain action points and completion dates. Observations of assessors and the advice they are given are not detailed enough.

Leadership and management

148. Satisfactory quality improvement measures have been established to improve standards of teaching and learning. All staff have been observed teaching recently, but these observations are not always conducted by a curriculum specialist. The internal verification system for the level 2 beauty therapy courses is being developed. Currently assessors' meetings are not recorded. Staff meetings have been held, and minutes are circulated to those unable to attend. The staff are knowledgeable about quality improvement arrangements, and have made contributions to the most recent self-assessment report. The self-assessment report generally agreed with the strengths and weaknesses identified at the inspection.

149. HACE has recently introduced new, accredited courses in beauty therapy to provide learners with career progression opportunities. However, the curriculum planning for the timely implementation of these courses was ineffective. A vocational specialist was not appointed to co-ordinate the programme until two months after it began. Equipment to support the courses, including uniforms for learners, were not all in place until after the course began. Delays have occurred in the provision of clients for learners. The development of learners' practical skills and the completion of case studies has been slow. A module essential to the accreditation of the course was introduced at a late stage, at week 19 of the 34-week course. The module is to be offered on Saturday mornings, which does not suit some learners' domestic arrangements.

Health, social care & public services

Health, social care & public services		2
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Early years - Adult and community learning	163	2
Counselling - Adult and community learning	115	2
Other contributory areas - Adult and community learning	146	2

Early years

Strengths

- good progression to higher-level courses and to related employment
- very good standards of teaching and learning
- responsive programme meeting community and learner needs
- good curriculum management

Weaknesses

- inadequate resources in some areas

Other contributory areas

Strengths

- good progression to higher-level courses and to related employment
- very good standards of teaching and learning
- responsive programme meeting community and learner needs
- good curriculum management

Weaknesses

- inadequate resources in some areas

Achievement and standards

150. Retention and pass rates on early years and counselling courses are satisfactory and showing significant improvements. The retention rates for the 15-week level 1 and 2 programmes have improved to 91 per cent and achievements have risen to 89 per cent. Retention on the NVQ early years programmes during the current year stands at 83 per cent.

151. Progression rates to higher-level courses and to related employment are good in all

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areas. Early years learners on NVQ programmes spoke about work-placement experiences leading directly to paid employment. Most learners achieving their NVQs take up paid work within the sector. All learners achieved a pass on the diploma course in childcare and education, delivered in conjunction with a local secondary school. All learners who completed the programme gained work in early years settings. Learners' portfolios of work are very well ordered. Learners draw effectively on their work-placement experiences to illustrate their background knowledge. Progression is good from level 1 to 3 on counselling courses. Seventy-two per cent of the learners taking a level 2 certificate in counselling skills had progressed from level 1. Eighty-one per cent of the learners on the level 3 programme had progressed from the level 2 programme. All were keen to discuss how they planned to use their qualification in employment or within the voluntary sector. Attendance at lessons is very good, at 87 per cent during the week of inspection. Learners take pride in their work.

Quality of education and training

152. Standards of teaching and learning are very good. Lessons are carefully planned for all courses and documents supporting this planning are detailed, focused and well matched with qualification requirements or learners' personal goals. The aims and learning objectives of lessons are clearly identified on all lesson plans, but in some cases they are not shared with learners at the beginning of the lessons. Tutors in all programmes are well qualified. Their considerable teaching and vocational experience contributes to good standards of teaching and gives learners a good understanding of the demands of their chosen vocational area. Tutors make clear links between background knowledge and vocational practice, and learners are able to discuss these with clarity and confidence. In a lesson on the importance of providing a positive learning environment for children's development, learners worked in pairs designing an early years setting to most effectively meet the needs of the children in their care.

153. Equal opportunities issues are discussed and promoted within the curriculum. In a playwork lesson the tutors discussed the effect of introducing a female football coach at a youth centre where he worked. In a counselling lesson, learners engaged very thoughtfully in a role-play activity which involved supporting a client with whom they had no sympathy and to whom they bore prejudice.

154. All learners complete a literacy, numeracy and language skills screening test before enrolment. Additional learning support is effective in supporting learners from all courses who have literacy, numeracy and language skills needs. The monitoring of learners' progress is good. Records of progress are detailed and up to date. All learners complete individual learning plans but often these do not have measurable targets and are not clearly linked with the teaching and monitoring processes. Learners in early years are able to discuss their progress and how it relates to the qualification requirements. Written work is marked with care. Strengths are identified and clear guidance is given for improvement. Internal verification is well developed in early years and counselling courses, but not for the complementary therapy courses. Learners speak very highly of the pastoral care and learning support that they receive from tutors and assessors. Staff

are generous with their time and provide focused and effective guidance.

155. A responsive programme of courses meets community and learners' needs. HACE has productive working relationships with a wide range of early years service providers and statutory and voluntary agencies in the borough. These include the Hounslow early years development partnership, Sure Start, the early years training forum west London, and a broad range of nursery, school and other pre-school organisations. This provides the context in which the adult and community education service responds positively to employment needs, the skill shortages in early years and to the specific government requirements for training in this area. All courses are timetabled to meet the needs of learners with childcare and other family responsibilities, in accessible neighbourhood centres throughout the borough.

156. Some of the learning resources are inadequate. Most classrooms are adequate, but some of the accommodation is unsatisfactory. One counselling lesson is delivered in very cramped conditions, where an adjoining room, which is sometimes used for paired and trio work, is also a community café. The setting is noisy, with no privacy. Specialist resources are inadequate on early years courses. Learners are not routinely issued with textbooks and have no access to a learning centre library or bookstore. Access to ICT is not planned sufficiently. Tutors themselves provide many of the learning resources used in lessons, and lend their own books to learners. Resources are inadequate for the effective delivery of level 3 anatomy and physiology to complementary therapy learners. There are no skeletons, models of muscles or poster-sized visual aids. Learners on the diploma in reflexology programme do not have sufficient opportunities to develop their practical skills. They rely on other members of the class, family and friends to provide opportunities for practical work.

Leadership and management

157. Curriculum management supports growth in the provision and continuous improvement. Course teams are well defined. Roles and responsibilities are clear and are well understood by staff and learners. HACE has an effective scheme for the observation of teaching and learning. Staff receive detailed feedback and clear guidance for improvement, following these observations. The actions agreed between tutors and observers are carefully monitored. Records of team meetings are detailed. Agreed action from meetings, however, is not always clearly monitored.

158. The internal verification policy is understood and effectively implemented in early years and counselling. Assessed work is internally verified regularly and according to awarding body requirements. Sampling plans are used for all courses in early years, playwork and counselling. Internal verifiers' reports identify strengths in the assessment processes and provide clear guidance for improvement. Internal verification, however, is less established for some complementary therapy courses. The self-assessment report in this area of learning was clear and evaluative. The action plans to resolve identified weaknesses were adequate.

Visual & performing arts & media

Visual & performing arts & media		2
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Arts - Adult and community learning	1139	2
Music - Adult and community learning	1131	2

Arts*Strengths*

- exceptionally good standards in learners' creative and technical skills
- particularly good and inventive teaching
- particularly thorough internal verification process
- good range of courses
- particularly effective curriculum leadership

Weaknesses

- ineffective individual learning plans

Music*Strengths*

- very good range of individual and ensemble courses in music
- inspired teaching and good skills development in some keyboard, drumming and drama courses
- very good provision of supplementary learning materials
- extensive range of enrichment activities for music
- very good specialist teaching centre for music

Weaknesses

- incomplete quality improvement monitoring arrangements
- unsuitable accommodation in some areas

Achievement and standards

159. Learners demonstrate exceptionally good standards of technical and creative skills in all visual arts courses. Learners are using a very wide range of media confidently and find the challenging tasks set by tutors stimulating. Tutors are rapidly developing not only learners' artistic and creative skills, but also their critical and analytical skills. Many learners have produced work to professional standards. In pottery and jewellery classes,

learners work confidently with a range of materials and a range of professional equipment. In wood turning, learners are developing the confidence to work with specialist machinery provided by HACE, in some cases independently of the tutor. Learners are confident in their approach to working with new media, such as pastels, watercolours or beech wood and are very articulate and perceptive when assessing their own and others' work. Learners take part in high-quality exhibitions at local galleries and also during adult learners' week.

160. All learners make good progress relative to their starting points, as evidenced by the artefacts produced during class and in their portfolios. This is particularly true of learners who are taking classes for the first time. Returning learners also show good progress, and almost all were able to identify ways that their creative and technical skills had improved over time. Many learners demonstrate a pride in their practical work, but are able to be suitably self-critical. A significant number of learners mentioned a high level of personal enrichment gained from classes. Learners have found an outlet for their creativity and also the opportunity for social interaction and mental stimulation. For some older learners their classes are the focal point of their week.

161. Retention of learners is satisfactory on accredited and non-accredited arts courses. The achievement level on accredited courses is 85 per cent with retention at 75 per cent for 2003-04. The non-accredited achievement rate is 96 per cent with retention at 83 per cent for the same period. Achievements on non-accredited courses are measured by the tutors' completion of individual learning plans, but this information is not always reliable.

162. Achievement levels on non-accredited music programmes in 2003-04 were very good at 95 per cent. However, on many of the 10-week courses which ended in December 2004, retention rates are low. On accredited courses, which make up under 4 per cent of the provision in the area, retention and achievement rates are low at 46 per cent and 64 per cent, respectively. Pass rates in music theory examinations are very good. In the large music ensembles, learners are developing technical skills to a very good standard. They participate in public performances, and in the baroque ensemble, singers and players are gaining a good stylistic awareness of baroque performance practice.

Quality of education and training

163. Teaching in visual arts classes is dynamic and inventive. Teaching and learning is well planned and structured, with clear links in most classes to prior learning. Activities range from challenging group tasks to individual project work. Tutors employ a very effective range of strategies to stimulate learners' own imagination and creativity, while at the same time matching this work with accreditation criteria. Learners are actively encouraged to explore and develop their own ideas. Tutors are constructive, positive and, in the better classes, inspirational, establishing a safe but challenging environment in which learners can fully express their own creativity. A successful range of teaching strategies is employed, including discussions and plenary sessions, as well as many opportunities for practical application of learners' new and developing skills. In one class,

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learners were given a black and white photograph of a landscape to reproduce as their own work using their choice of media, but using only warm colours from the colour wheel. This device introduced the class effectively to abstract work and practitioners such as Fauve. Several learners would not have had the confidence to approach these experimental tasks without careful guidance. Learners are encouraged to apply analytical thought to their work, and are developing good observational skills, which many apply outside of the classroom.

164. In music, there is some inspired teaching and good skills development in keyboard, drumming and drama courses. Learners are keen and in most lessons make good or very good progress. Relationships between tutors and learners are easy, effective and built on mutual respect. In the most successful lessons, the enthusiasm, secure subject knowledge and effective teaching style of the tutor inspires learners to make very good progress in the development of technical skills. In one drumming workshop, learners were encouraged to work far beyond the limits they initially set for themselves. Good standards of learning are matched equally by enjoyment of the lessons. In a drama workshop the tutor skilfully uses more experienced actors to help the less able learners. In the large ensembles, repertoires are chosen which challenge learners' performance abilities. The baroque ensemble is working on a demanding early French cantata by Lalande, and the symphony orchestra is preparing the 4th symphony of Tchaikovsky for a forthcoming concert.

165. Very good supplementary learning materials are prepared by the music tutors. In a drumming workshop, the tutor has prepared a CD which enables learners to practise drumming skills at home, and in another lesson on folk guitar, the tutor has produced a compilation CD of all songs to be studied, together with a networked computer program which allows learners to work on the more theoretical aspects of music.

166. A very good specialist music centre is available for learners on a school site in the centre of the borough. It has very well-equipped rehearsal rooms, and plenty of room for performances by large groups. Well-resourced teaching spaces cater for a particularly broad range of instrumental and performance styles. Learners value the range of opportunities for learning and performance, and speak positively of the professional atmosphere in the centre.

167. The accommodation for visual arts courses is adequate. Some courses, such as pottery and jewellery, are operating in well-equipped dedicated sites, but some workspaces are unsatisfactory. Tutors do not make sufficient use of available data projectors and smart boards. Handouts are of satisfactory quality. Most tutors are suitably qualified, many to degree level.

168. Internal verification is particularly thorough in visual arts. The internal visits are regular and have the added value of producing a separate feedback report for each assessor. This feeds into the cycle of continuous improvement. Tutors are able to improve their own assessment practice when marking work on accredited courses. Tutors have found this to be very helpful and supportive and can identify instances of improvements to the service they provide for their learners.

169. An extensive range of enrichment activities exists for music learners. The large ensemble groups perform regular concerts at professional and semi-professional venues throughout west London. HACE has also planned a singing tour of European churches for the festival choir. Regular public performance opportunities are available for all groups. Learners place very high value on these opportunities, and the quality and range of activities enhances learners' skills and develops their confidence.

170. HACE provides a very good range of individual and ensemble courses in music. Individual tuition is available for a wide range of instruments, covering a very broad spectrum of musical styles and genres. There are numerous choral and instrumental groups, ranging from quartets to full symphony orchestras. Until recently, the extensive and unique range of individual and ensemble courses has been provided at the Hounslow adult and community education music centre. The new curriculum manager is actively seeking to extend the provision throughout the borough, and to further develop outreach provision in music, dance and drama.

171. A good range of courses is provided in visual arts throughout the borough. New initiatives to widen participation have been introduced and courses in Asian fashion and Asian garlands are now offered. Other art classes are targeted at older learners who will not attend learning centres in the evenings. The provision covers the more common areas such as dressmaking, watercolours, upholstery, interior design, mosaics and art, but also includes courses where specialist accommodation is provided, such as wood turning and pottery. Other courses offered include spinning and weaving, lace making and plumbing. There is a considerable amount of provision in the daytime as well as evenings, and many learners cite the presence of daytime classes as a reason for continued attendance.

172. Some accommodation for music courses is unsuitable. In some centres, noise is transmitted between rooms, and this disrupts learning. In some venue, rooms are not arranged in ways to help learning. For instance, a piano in a music theory room was placed in such a way that the tutors spent most of a class with their back to the learners. At one venue used as a dance hall, the heating was inadequate.

173. Individual learning plans are not used sufficiently in visual arts. All learners complete a plan, but many do not understand its function, as is reflected in the comments they make. Tutors do not make good use of the plans to support the learners and subscribe to their own planning. Targets are generic and very few learners have been encouraged to set any personal learning goals. The personal profile provides an opportunity for the learners to establish their target attainment level when beginning their courses, but these are rarely taken advantage of and where they are, some fields are completed with single-word answers. Individual learning plans are also used in non-accredited provision as a means of recording achievements, but many are signed off by the tutor before course completion. In at least one instance a learner appeared to have not achieved their objectives because the tutor had forgotten to sign off their learning plan. However, most tutors keep up-to-date records of progress in their files. Learners receive appropriate written and verbal feedback and understand how they are

progressing.

Leadership and management

174. Curriculum leadership is particularly effective in visual arts. The new curriculum manager has been in post for six months and has established good communications with tutors in this area. Regular quality audits of register files take place to ensure that documents are completed correctly. There are records of follow-up actions and good support being provided where files have not been completed, or where tutors do not understand processes. Observations of teaching and learning visits are carried out and the target of 50 per cent coverage has already been exceeded. A good level of support has been established for tutors, linked to observations. Session-planning has improved. Attendance at tutors' meetings varies from 30 per cent to 60 per cent, and minutes are circulated to all tutors. The tutors have a high level of trust in managers and feel that they are responsive to new ideas. Tutors feel well supported, they acknowledge the open management style and appreciate the subject-specialist knowledge of their new curriculum manager. New classes have been introduced to widen participation, aimed at the Asian population, and there are plans for more targeted classes to be offered in the future.

175. The promotion of equal opportunities is satisfactory in the area of learning, and the quality assurance of the provision is satisfactory in arts courses. The self-assessment report is a good assessment of the provision, but some aspects have been improved since its publication, particularly departmental communications.

176. The management team for music and performing arts has recently changed, and the new curriculum manager is energetically broadening the range and location of courses within the area of learning, with good results. However, the post of part-time curriculum support worker is currently unfilled, and there are not enough quality monitoring arrangements in music. Tutors are given good support to gain teaching awards, but their responsibilities in the management of programmes are not made clear, or reinforced. Attendance at music staff meetings is low, only 22 per cent of staff attended the most recent pre-inspection meeting, and there are examples of non-compliance in the submission of key documents for quality assurance purposes.

English, languages & communications

English, languages & communications		2
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Languages - Adult and community learning	1096	2

Languages

Strengths

- good development of learners' skills
- good standards of teaching
- good range of programmes to widen participation
- good leadership and management

Weaknesses

- ineffective initial advice and guidance for some learners
- insufficient sharing of good practice

Achievement and standards

177. Learners develop skills in language and BSL classes. Learners are very well motivated and diligent in lessons. In language classes they interact well with each other to practise the skills of listening and speaking. They are able to listen for the gist of conversations and extract essential information from longer passages. Learners are developing a good vocabulary. In beginners' classes they are able to read simple passages, and can write short sentences using the script of the taught language. In one exceptional class, learners were able to seek clarification from the tutor and each other in the taught language. In advanced language classes, learners discuss more complex ideas and technical vocabulary relating to the country and culture being studied. In English classes, learners are able to analyse texts well in response to the tutors' questions.

178. Achievement rates on accredited courses in languages increased by 9 per cent between 2003-04, from 68 per cent to 77 per cent, but the success rate for the small number of non-OCN courses was low, at 47 per cent during 2003-04. HACE acknowledged this in its self-assessment report and has taken appropriate remedial action. Attendance is satisfactory at 72 per cent. In a small number of foreign language classes, learners do not have sufficient opportunities to practise their language skills.

Quality of education and training

179. The quality of teaching is good. Most language tutors are skilled in the use of the taught language, using it carefully to develop learners' listening skills and to extend their vocabulary. They combine whole-class and interactive techniques well to create lively and varied lessons which involve the learners. In one signing class, particularly effective use was made of pair work to develop vocabulary and practise signing skills. In some classes, tutors incorporate learner requests into the syllabus, as in the example of a Spanish class that used the language to help learners plan a trip abroad. In another class, the tutor provided good, differentiated conversational activities for new learners. However, in a small number of classes the taught language is sometimes spoken too fast or used inconsistently, which confuses learners.

180. Learners have good access to a very good range of 12 languages throughout the borough. As well as the more common European languages, there are courses in Arabic, Hindi, Punjabi, Japanese and Mandarin. HACE has established a clear progression model that extends from an initial, non-accredited taster course to accredited courses at level 1, 2 and 3. Some learners are progressing through the various levels in their chosen language. Courses are attracting learners who wish to learn for holiday and travel purposes, as well as those who are doing it for reasons related to work or living abroad. Some learners are studying in order to be able to speak or write their second or third language more efficiently. In the better classes, learners are taught about the wider cultural context of the language, or study contemporary issues related to the country in question. Good progression opportunities are offered in the BSL programme, which has grown in size over the past three years. Opportunities for learning some of the languages during the day or at weekends are limited.

181. Resources are satisfactory. A good range of equipment is available in most learning centres, including cassette players, overhead projectors, and in some cases video facilities. Some teaching rooms are of a good size, and can be used flexibly. Some staff prepare bright and attractive resources, and use relevant, everyday materials such as supermarket flyers and maps to enliven their teaching. In one instance, a tutor provided learners with a useful list of language-related resources held in the local library. Another tutor referred learners to the internet for current materials. In some classes, however, learners work with dull, photocopied handouts. Some school locations are noisy, cold and unwelcoming and do not have relevant display materials to interest learners. None of the language courses employs IT in its teaching strategies.

182. Assessments are satisfactory. Tutors use a range of methods to assess and monitor learning. Some tutors are skilled at asking questions to elicit answers, and circulate methodically around the class during small group or pair work to check on learning. In most cases, homework is set regularly in order to build up a portfolio of evidence for accreditation. Learners are prepared well for external assessments. In one case, they were working methodically through pre-released materials, and prompted to carry out their own analysis of these using a grid prepared by the tutor. Language tutors give good individual preparation for verbal tests, in order to develop learners' self-confidence and language skills. Most tutors keep good assessment records. In one case, content and

grammatical structures were identified separately, with a clear indication of when and how these had been assessed. Individual learning plans are used to monitor learning, but these are not always completed satisfactorily. Mid-course learners' reviews are not always carried out as required. The usefulness and importance of the individual learning plan is not always apparent to learners. In some cases, learners are not aware until after they have enrolled that their course leads to accreditation. Some of the coaching for external assessment is carried out in unsuitable public areas outside the classroom.

183. Arrangements for the pastoral support of learners are satisfactory. On accredited courses, they are invited to indicate their support needs in their learning plans. A small number of learners are making use of this service. BSL learners are supported by interpreters, and this helps them to complete their courses successfully. In other classes, learners with visual impairments are well supported by tutors, and are able to use adaptive technologies and large-print handouts as required.

184. Some learners receive ineffective initial advice and guidance. New learners who join the non-accredited beginners' language courses are not entitled to additional learning support. These courses comprise about 50 per cent of the total provision in this area of learning. Learners do not understand how to identify their support needs, or how these may be met by the provider. Detailed information to guide learners to suitable courses is not readily available before enrolment. General marketing literature gives a brief description of each course, but prospective learners do not have access to specialised language-related guidance. One learner on a general certificate of education AS level course was not aware of the difference in level between that and the GCSE they had taken some years previously. HACE has identified the provision of better initial advice as an area for development. Some information about progression opportunities is available in the individual learning plan, but the quality of the advice given to learners depends on the knowledge of the class tutor.

Leadership and management

185. The curriculum manager is supported by a small team of curriculum support co-ordinators who each have a background in languages. The hours allocated to these staff have recently been increased. Regular staff meetings are convened once each term, and there are frequent informal contacts between tutors, and between tutors and managers. Tutors are consulted about, and contribute to, the self-assessment report.

186. The arrangements for ensuring quality improvements are good. HACE identified the main weakness of its provision in its self-assessment report. New staff are mentored by the curriculum support co-ordinators who provide reports to the curriculum manager about their activities. The curriculum has a schedule of graded classroom observations for all staff. The proportion of staff observed in the current year is considerably greater than the previous year. Reports are produced with actions indicated for the tutor, manager and head of centre, as required. Grades are moderated, and where these are poor, further observations are carried out and mentor support is given. Staff are also invited to observe an experienced colleague. In one instance, a tutor had requested an observation in order to help resolve a particular problem. HACE has detailed plans for

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improving retention and achievement rates on all courses. The provider has no programme of mentor training.

187. Equality of opportunity is satisfactory. The programme of classes in this area of learning is helping HACE to widen participation. The range of languages and the courses for the hearing impaired ensure participation by people from minority ethnic groups and people with disabilities. Tutors have received training in equal opportunities and in ways to counter discrimination against people with disabilities.

188. Insufficient sharing of good practice takes place. Staff meetings do not focus sufficiently on teaching and learning. Some post-observation action plans focus on administration and paperwork and do not give sufficient prominence to actions to improve teaching and learning. There is no suggestion of how observed and recorded good practice will be shared. Suggestions frequently indicate in general terms what should be done, but do not inform the tutor how to implement appropriate actions. Professional development opportunities are available to staff, but there is not enough help to support some of them in dealing with the diversity of learners attending their classes.

Foundation programmes

Foundation programmes		3
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
<i>ESOL</i> - Adult and community learning	635	3
<i>Literacy and numeracy</i> - Adult and community learning	111	3

ESOL

Strengths

- good attendance rates
- good achievement and retention rates
- good development of provision to widen participation

Weaknesses

- ineffective use of individual learning plans for some learners
- insufficient use of ICT in some classes

Literacy and numeracy

Strengths

- much good teaching
- very effective quality improvement arrangements

Weaknesses

- insufficient response to individual learners' needs
- insufficient use of information technology (IT) in some classes
- low recruitment rate

Achievement and standards

189. Achievement and retention rates are satisfactory in literacy and numeracy. In 2003-04, the achievement rate was 68 per cent and the retention rate was 74 per cent. In ESOL classes, achievement and retention rates are good. In 2003-04, the achievement rate was 75 per cent and the retention rate was 86 per cent. The five-week modules are successful in motivating learners to complete the programmes, and certificates of attendance and achievement recognise learners' achievements.

190. During the inspection, attendance in ESOL classes was good, at 85 per cent. In literacy and numeracy classes, attendance was 71 per cent. In both areas there is an effective procedure for contacting learners after any unplanned absence.

191. Learners develop confidence and apply their new skills at home and in the workplace. Managers and colleagues of learners on a workplace English course have commented on the learners' improved skills and their contribution to the business. They are able to carry out their duties more efficiently and effectively.

192. In one outreach English class, a learner with disabilities who had a poor experience of formal education at school has become enthusiastic about learning and is preparing to take level 1 tests. In one class, learners have gained sufficient confidence to ask if they can read aloud to the group. In numeracy classes, learners develop appropriate mathematical concepts, vocabulary and skills. ESOL learners make steady progress and develop confidence in using English. They value the independence they have gained with their skills.

Quality of education and training

193. A lot of good teaching is provided in literacy and numeracy programmes. Tutors establish a positive environment in which learners work purposefully. In the better classes, tutors set a brisk pace, and lessons are planned and structured to stimulate and challenge the learners at an appropriate level. Effective questioning techniques are used that successfully help learners to extend their understanding and skills when carrying out literacy and numeracy tasks. The skills to be developed and the contexts of the learning activities are relevant, useful and interesting to the learners. Practical tasks are used effectively. Learners' written work is marked thoroughly and used to plan activities to practise and reinforce their skills. In the less effective classes, the pace is slower and the activities less challenging.

194. Teaching in ESOL is satisfactory. In the better classes there is clear evidence of active learning taking place, with stimulating and challenging tasks set at the appropriate level. Tutors use pictures and objects to set learning tasks in a context which relates to the experience of the learner. For example, learners brought photographs of their families to learn and practise prepositions of position, such as 'next to' 'behind' and 'in front of'. When teaching vocabulary connected with ailments, the tutor used packaging from a range of different medications. Tutors correct pronunciation and speech patterns in spoken English. A good variety of learning strategies is used, including discovery techniques and task-based learning. Tutors elicit responses and check individual learners' understanding.

195. Resources are satisfactory. Although much of the learning material used is from appropriate resources, tutors use too many photocopied worksheets which are not specific to the needs and interests of the learners. Tutors have devised some good materials using resources such as advertisements and instruction leaflets for household appliances. Good numeracy resources include mirrors and three-dimensional shapes to identify lines of symmetry. At outreach centres, tutors do not have sufficient access to materials and resources. Some tutors supply their own board pens, cassettes or CD players and use their own tape recorders to offer listening practice. Other tutors use their

own computers and printers to make worksheets for their learners.

196. The quality of accommodation is satisfactory overall. The accommodation in some outreach venues is excellent. Two courses operate in a new nursery which is suitably light and bright, and where a free crèche is available during classes, for learners' children. Some classrooms are easily accessible for local communities. However, some venues suffer from being next to noisy classrooms and one is next to a playground. In the summer the windows have to be kept closed because of the noise. One class is held in a first-floor room to which there is no access lift. A multi-purpose room in a school centre was light and spacious, but large boxes of equipment were stacked along two walls and on top of several high cupboards.

197. ICT is not used sufficiently to support learning. This weakness was identified in the provider's self-assessment report. Learners' files provide insufficient evidence of the use of ICT to produce good copies of written work. Some learners use computers at home, and want to develop their ICT skills. This requires good reading and comprehension skills and a opportunities to develop literacy and ESOL skills in a useful, real context. ICT is being introduced, but at the time of the inspection, computers are not readily available at most venues. Some tutors bring their own laptop computers to their classes. In most classes, special arrangements must be made to secure access to ICT. Where computers are available they are not used routinely. Some laptop computers are available, but not enough for a whole class of learners. When IT is available and is used, word-processing tutorial materials are not available to support independent learning. Although some training has been provided, not all tutors feel competent to use IT in the classroom.

198. HACE does not use sufficient information from initial assessment and individual learning plans in the planning of learning. The self-assessment report identified the poor development of individual learning plans. There is no diagnostic assessment. Individual learning plans are generic, augmented by one or two individual learning goals for each module, and in some classes these individual goals are common to all learners. In most classes, individual learning plans are held by tutors, and learners do not routinely refer or contribute to them. Tutors have been resourceful in making time to draw up individual learning plans, especially in low-level ESOL classes where the learners are unable to work on their own for any length of time. Individual learning plans, however, are not used as useful working documents, or to comment on or record evaluations of learning. Tutors record learners' achievements, but their success is not noted in their individual learning plans to allow them to have a record and recognition of their progress.

199. Learners have the opportunity to achieve national accreditation once each year. This is not flexible enough to meet the needs of individual learners who may be able to make faster progress. For example, ESOL learners on most courses are offered national accreditation in speaking and listening skills. Only those learners attending one of the three courses at entry level 1, 2 and 3 have the opportunity to gain national accreditation in reading and writing, which learners need for employment. HACE plans to develop more of these courses.

200. Literacy, numeracy and ESOL courses are provided at appropriate levels to meet

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the needs of learners. ESOL courses at level 1 and level 2 are offered at the local college. Literacy, numeracy and ESOL courses take place at times and places which are convenient for learners, although some learners wanted more flexible arrangements to suit their shift patterns. Some literacy learners would like to be able to attend more than one class, but there are not enough tutors to expand the provision. Many ESOL learners would like their courses to include more lessons each week.

201. Learners receive satisfactory guidance and support. Many learners made their first contact with the service by telephone, and received helpful information about the available courses. Most learners receive satisfactory information about other learning opportunities at HACE, and at other local providers. The HACE learning adviser had visited some classes to let learners know what advice and guidance is offered, and learners had been able to book individual appointments. Tutors and curriculum co-ordinators give information and make referrals to, for example, the local college and to learndirect.

202. Specialist support for learners with different kinds of disabilities is usually available when needs are identified. For example, a learning support assistant is providing support for a profoundly deaf learner in a literacy class. Three learners have recently been referred for dyslexia specialist screening and assessment. An ESOL learner with mild learning difficulties is also being supported by a learning support assistant. This person had made resources to help the learner spell the names of her family, using clothes pegs marked with the letters of the alphabet. The learning support assistant prompted and guided the learner to work successfully in a small group carrying out some listening and speaking activities.

Leadership and management

203. The ESOL provision has been well developed to widen participation. Courses take place in a wide range of venues, including the six main centres and 17 outreach venues. Free crèche facilities are available for the children of learners attending 21 classes, and these courses are scheduled to enable learners with childcare responsibilities to attend during school hours. Some classes are attended only by women. In many classes, men and women learners from a wide range of different ethnic, religious and language backgrounds work together and their learning experience is enriched.

204. Equality of opportunity is emphasised in the form used for literacy and numeracy lesson plans. This includes a section entitled 'How will I promote diversity?'. ESOL tutors complete a form entitled 'ESOL class profile: who are your learners?' which prompts consideration of the diversity of the group and its needs.

205. Quality assurance is effective in maintaining the quality of provision. The self-assessment report provides an accurate and useful tool for quality improvement. Effective quality assurance systems monitor the quality of provision, and the internal verification of the HACE modular courses is good. Tutors deliver induction at the beginning of the year and to individual learners as they join the classes. HACE has invested heavily to improve the standards of teaching and learning. Observation targets

have been exceeded and 80 per cent of tutors have been observed this year. The grades awarded were similar to those given by inspectors. Observation was used to identify tutors' training needs and to arrange suitable courses. Tutors are enrolled on a variety of courses, including level 4 subject-specialist qualifications in literacy, numeracy and ESOL. The effect of tutor training on contextualising learning is clearly evidenced in the learning activities which are realistic and relevant to learners.

206. Many partnerships are well established and HACE has a history of a small but successful provision of literacy and numeracy courses in the workplace. These courses are valued by business partners and the learners. However, the number of such courses does not meet the borough's needs. The need for development has been recognised by the Hounslow learning partnership, which has identified literacy and numeracy provision as a priority from September 2005.

207. The literacy and numeracy co-ordinator had responsibility for three areas of work and 12 tutors. The ESOL co-ordinator had direct responsibility for 26 tutors. There has been a vacancy for the Skills for Life manager and after six months of advertising in the educational press, an appointment was made to the post, but the new manager had not begun work at the time of inspection.

208. Despite efforts to recruit more learners to the literacy and numeracy courses, the range of provision is not developed sufficiently to meet the needs of the residents. To widen participation, three classes have been provided to serve specific communities. Learners with ESOL needs were attracted to two of them and the focus of the programmes was changed. The third class continues. Learners at all three classes have access to free crèche facilities.

Family learning

Family learning		2
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
- Adult and community learning	169	2

Strengths

- good practical skills development for children and adults
- much good teaching
- strong partnerships to secure accessible provision borough-wide
- very effective widening participation strategies to meet community needs

Weaknesses

- insufficient opportunities for accreditation
- inappropriate accommodation in some areas
- incomplete progress monitoring systems

Achievement and standards

209. Learners on family learning programmes achieve very good standards, particularly in practical skills. Adults and children collaborate effectively and work well together to develop their creative and problem solving skills. Parents enjoy spending time learning with their children. They develop greater patience and learn to listen to and value their children's views. They make good progress and the volume and quality of their practical work is particularly good in pottery, sewing, arts and crafts. In sewing the quality of the cross-stitch bags produced in two weeks was so impressive that the tutor asked for the learners' agreement to mount an exhibition. In yoga, children and adults achieve good positions, many of which they create themselves. They successfully remember sequences of poses. Family learning endows other social and health benefits, particularly in yoga and dance. In family literacy and numeracy, parents gain a good understanding of the language of the national curriculum and are able to reinforce their children's learning at home. Parents gain confidence and are able to discuss matters more effectively with their children's tutors and other parents, and spend more time in the playground. There is a significant improvement in many children's attainment levels and test results.

210. On the longer family literacy and numeracy courses, tutors successfully encourage learners to take the national tests. Learners are well motivated and look forward to the tests. For some learners this is their first opportunity to gain a national qualification. Success rates are very good, at 89 per cent in literacy and 100 per cent in numeracy. Learners on shorter taster courses produce well-presented portfolios which are internally verified for a service certificate. Many schools celebrate parents' achievement in their assemblies. Most learners are enthusiastic about their courses.

211. The family learning programme does not offer sufficient opportunities for accreditation. National tests are not offered to able learners on the shorter FLLN courses, and the availability of qualifications in other curriculum areas has not been sufficiently explored. There are insufficient clearly defined progression routes and many learners continue to enrol on successive taster courses on the FLLN programme and the WFL programmes.

212. Attendance and retention rates are very good and were both at 79 per cent during inspection. One learner changed shifts to attend the family numeracy course, another took a day's leave to attend the short taster course. Tutors are informed appropriately of learners' absences, either by telephone or through other learners.

Quality of education and training

213. There is a lot of good teaching on WFL and FLLN courses. Approximately 66 per cent of observed sessions were good or better, and none of the observed sessions was unsatisfactory. All lessons are well planned and most are delivered at a good pace. In the best classes, tutors use a range of teaching approaches and support materials to demonstrate techniques and reinforce concepts for a range of ability levels. Classroom management is good and effective interactive learning and a good rapport are generated within the classroom. In most joint classes, learners work with and support adults and children in other families. Tutors encourage learners to have confidence in and develop their own critical skills. In the best classes, learners actively welcome advice from others and tutors will often invite the whole class to give their comments on someone's work. The course content is imaginative enough to broaden learners' knowledge and engage children's interest. Themes during the week included a focus on the environment and the use of recycled materials in arts and crafts, red nose day in sewing, and animal positions in yoga. In sewing, children's interest was sustained by taking photographs of the display of work. In FLLN a standard course outline provides a good structure for all tutors. In the best classes, tutors modify their handouts to meet learners' needs. However, in a small number of sessions, tutors rely too much on paper-based exercises and handouts and there is not enough diversity in the content or images.

214. Regular assignments and homework are set on most courses. In FLLN, adults are enthusiastic in using the games and learning aids and techniques learnt at home. On WFL courses, learners are proud of their achievements and take their work home to complete and show to family members and friends. Good reviews take place of the previous week's work and learners share highlights and difficulties. All tutors encourage and regularly remind learners on shorter FLLN courses to complete their portfolios.

215. Tutors have good subject knowledge and vocational expertise to enhance learning on all programmes. Most tutors have adult teaching qualifications. WFL tutors are drawn mainly from the wider curriculum for their subject expertise. Many are practising professionals in their field. Careful selection of tutors for family learning is supplemented by in-service family learning training and opportunities to observe each other's classes. A mentor is allocated during the early stages of teaching. All tutors have stage one adult

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teaching qualifications or are expected to achieve this within two years. However, on the FLLN programme no tutor has carried out training in the subject specification, although most intend to enrol when more national programmes become available.

216. Support for tutors is satisfactory. Effective staff development processes have been established. Minuted termly staff meetings include training and are complemented by regular correspondence to tutors. Other meetings for FLLN project staff include FaCT, based in primary schools. Staff are encouraged to take relevant external training. HACE provides fees support for such training. However, many skills for life training events clash with teaching commitments and FLLN staff are unaware that they can be paid for this training. They are reluctant to undergo skills for life subject specification training in their own time.

217. HACE has effective widening participation strategies to meet community needs. Free crèche provision on FLLN programmes enables many learners to participate. A wide range of childcare provision is available, including learning centre crèches, provision of on-site facilities, infill in school nurseries and access to neighbouring community childcare. Many learners could not attend without access to childcare. HACE subsidises resources to reduce costs for learners.

218. Tutors develop creative ideas for using everyday waste products enabling affordable practice at home. There are good displays of books, photographs and pre-worked examples to encourage learners and allow them to see that resources need not be too expensive. FLLN learners are given literacy and numeracy vocabulary books free of charge, and can borrow dictionaries and thesauruses to support their homework. A wide variety of borough-wide venues is used and all classes observed included a good representation of the borough's diverse ethnic, language and social communities.

219. HACE's systems for the formal monitoring of learners' progress and progression are incomplete. The initial assessment procedure for FLLN is not able to assess the range of learners' abilities effectively and there is no formal diagnostic assessment. Individual learning plans are applied throughout the programmes but they do not properly identify individual learning goals and are not used effectively to monitor progress. There is a range of lesson and course evaluation tools. In the best classes the learners' feedback wall is used to good effect. Tutors use evaluation feedback from lessons to improve their skills. Some tutors receive advice and guidance during their courses from the Sure Start or widening participation co-ordinators. Improved signposting has been initiated through the 'where now' leaflet and the service is developing a 'family learning passport'.

220. Some of the accommodation is inappropriate. The provision is spread throughout the borough, utilising partners' premises and including on average four new schools each year. However, some of the accommodation is not suited for family learning. In some schools, parents learn in rooms using infant chairs, and rooms are subject to changes before a lesson, and in one instance, twice during a lesson.

Leadership and management

221. Strong partnerships help to achieve a broad and accessible provision throughout the borough. Hounslow family learning works effectively with a range of agencies to develop a complementary and responsive provision to meet the needs of the whole community. The family learning managers are active in a number of local, regional and national forums including the west London family learning action group, Hounslow family learning strategy, and residents' and community associations. The borough's FaCT team is a key partner in liaising with schools and providing the tutors for the FLLN programme. A Sure Start-funded co-ordinator works with the WFL team. The FaCT co-ordinators located in subscribing schools collaborate effectively with HACE's widening participation activities on target estates, and with the family learning co-ordinator. Together they identify needs, promote learning and recommend new programmes.

222. The full range of 'skills for families' activities is available to residents of the borough. There is a good range of marketing materials. Termly fun days and themed activities in schools, demonstrations in assemblies and taster sessions on parents' evenings have been successful in attracting new partners and learners. However, although positive images are used to reflect ethnic diversity, there are no publicity leaflets in community languages.

223. Funding is used well by HACE. The 2003-04 enrolment target was exceeded and at the time of inspection, good progress was being made towards the 2004-05 LSC target. Health and safety is satisfactory. Tutors highlight the dangers on practical courses, but not all learners wore aprons in two of the practical sessions.

224. Levels of participation by minority ethnic groups are good. The borough's diverse community is well represented in terms of nationality, race, religion and language. However, men are not fully represented. During inspection only one man was present in the classes observed. Some grandparents, aunts and older siblings accompany children to classes.

225. Quality improvement arrangements have been introduced satisfactorily. Systems exist for observing teaching, and to provide staff with mentors. All tutors have been observed in the past two terms and each has received written feedback after observation. Staff value the observation process and have a good understanding of quality improvement arrangements. The area self-assessment report highlighted some of the strengths and weaknesses identified by inspectors, and was supported by a clear development plan.