

# REINSPECTION REPORT

## **Tyne North Training Limited Reinspection**

**25 October 2005**



ADULT LEARNING  
INSPECTORATE

## Grading

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

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

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

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

## Adult Learning Inspectorate

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

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

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

# **REINSPECTION REPORT**

## **Tyne North Training Limited Reinspection**

### **Contents**

#### **Summary**

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

#### **Detailed reinspection findings**

Leadership and management	9
Equality of opportunity	11
Quality assurance	12
Engineering, technology & manufacturing	14

## REINSPECTION REPORT

### DESCRIPTION OF THE PROVIDER

1. Tyne North Training Limited (TNT) is a charity and company limited by guarantee. It is based between Newcastle upon Tyne and Tynemouth and was established in 1968 as an engineering industry group training organisation. It works with 62 employers in Tyne and Wear. Most of the employers are engineering, marine, offshore or related companies. Off-the-job training is subcontracted to two colleges of further education, Tyne Metropolitan College and South Tyneside College.

2. TNT employs 10 full-time staff and is overseen by an executive committee of eight. The manager has overall responsibility for the company. The other staff are an assistant manager, three administrative staff, one senior training officer and four training officers. All the training officers are both assessors and internal verifiers.

3. TNT has held a direct contract with Tyne and Wear Learning and Skills Council (LSC) since 2002.

### SCOPE OF PROVISION

#### Engineering, technology & manufacturing

4. At the reinspection, 227 learners were following work-based learning programmes in engineering and manufacturing technology. Two hundred and eighteen were advanced apprentices, two were apprentices and seven were taking national vocational qualifications (NVQs). Learners follow programmes in mechanical engineering, electrical engineering and manufacturing, including fabrication and welding. Ninety-four learners are on manufacturing programmes, 56 learners are on mechanical engineering and programmes and 46 learners are on electrical engineering programmes. Thirty-one learners are on other engineering programmes. Advanced apprentices attend Tyne Metropolitan College or South Tyneside College for the first six months and take an NVQ in performing engineering operations at level 2. After that they attend college for one day each week and train in the workplace towards an NVQ at level 3 and key skills at level 2. TNT's training officers visit learners at work every 12 weeks to review their progress. They also visit workplaces more frequently to provide assessment and support. TNT does an initial assessment and uses the results to determine the most suitable level of programme for each learner and to identify any needs for additional learning support.

## ABOUT THE REINSPECTION

Number of inspectors	4
Number of inspection days	8
Number of learners interviewed	26
Number of staff interviewed	18
Number of employers interviewed	2
Number of subcontractors interviewed	1
Number of locations/sites/learning centres visited	8
Number of partners/external agencies interviewed	3
Number of visits	4

## OVERALL JUDGEMENT

5. At the previous inspection in August 2004, leadership and management and quality assurance were unsatisfactory. Equality of opportunity and provision for young people in engineering, technology and manufacturing were satisfactory. Provision for adults was good. At the end of the reinspection process, all aspects of the provision were found to be satisfactory or better.

## GRADES

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

*Grades awarded at previous inspection*

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

<b>Engineering, technology &amp; manufacturing</b>		<b>3</b>
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
<b><i>Mechanical engineering</i></b>		
- Apprenticeships for young people	49	3
<b><i>Electrical engineering</i></b>		
- Apprenticeships for young people	40	3
<b><i>Manufacturing</i></b>		
- Apprenticeships for young people	103	3
- Other government-funded provision	11	2
<b><i>Other contributory areas</i></b>		
- Apprenticeships for young people	16	3

*Grades awarded at reinspection*

<b>Leadership and management</b>	<b>2</b>
Contributory grades:	
Equality of opportunity	3
Quality assurance	3

<b>Engineering, technology &amp; manufacturing</b>		<b>2</b>
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
<b><i>Mechanical engineering</i></b> - Apprenticeships for young people	56	2
<b><i>Electrical engineering</i></b> - Apprenticeships for young people	46	2
<b><i>Manufacturing</i></b> - Apprenticeships for young people	94	2
<b><i>Other contributory areas</i></b> - Apprenticeships for young people	31	2

**KEY FINDINGS****Achievement and standards**

6. **Achievement rates are very good.** In the two years for which data is available, 1999-2001, 89 per cent of advanced apprentices completed their framework. This is very good for the area of learning. At the previous inspection, some learners were making slow progress. At the reinspection, inspectors found no examples of slow progress. Learners' written work is satisfactory. Their practical work in the workplace and at college is good.

7. **Learners achieve a broad range of additional qualifications.** These include qualifications in lift truck driving, basic health and safety, manual handling, welding and electrical regulations. Many learners achieve higher-level qualifications, including some at degree level.

**Quality of education and training***Grades awarded to learning sessions*

	<b>Grade 1</b>	<b>Grade 2</b>	<b>Grade 3</b>	<b>Grade 4</b>	<b>Total</b>
Engineering, technology & manufacturing	0	0	3	0	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>

8. **TNT continues to provide a good range of on-the-job training activities.** Learners work on a wide range of tasks and develop good practical skills. Learners work in different departments and learn to do a variety of increasingly complex tasks. Flexible arrangements allow learners to develop good skills at an individual pace. Workplace mentors provide effective guidance and support. Learners produce good work in real conditions.

9. **At the previous inspection, support for learners was good. This has been enhanced.** TNT's training officers visit learners frequently to discuss training and pastoral matters. Learners are encouraged to contact training officers in between visits and are confident that problems will be dealt with sympathetically and efficiently. Progression is encouraged through various types of financial support.

10. The range of programmes and qualifications offered is satisfactory in meeting learners' aspirations. TNT's staff are well qualified and experienced. Their training skills are satisfactory.

11. Since the previous inspection, assessment has improved. Assessment and internal verification are now satisfactory.

12. Training in key skills has improved since the previous inspection and is now satisfactory. Key skills are now taught from the start of the training programme. Previous achievements are recognised and used to exempt learners from some of the key skills tests. The subcontracted colleges are monitored effectively. At one college, all the learners except one completed key skills within their first year.

13. Initial assessment is now satisfactory. All learners are tested to identify a suitable training programme and any additional learning needs. However, TNT has recognised that some initial assessments need to take place sooner. Very few learners need additional learning support.

14. **Individual learning plans are weak and are not regularly updated.** Other documents exist that record learners' progress and achievement but they are not included in learners' files or attached to individual learning plans.

## **Leadership and management**

15. **TNT now manages its subcontractors well.** A clear and detailed service level agreement describes what is expected of each party. Effective meetings are held to resolve problems and discuss change. Subcontractors produce regular, detailed reports about learners' progress that are used at progress reviews. Arrangements for assuring the quality of teaching are effective. The subcontractors are set targets that are clearly linked to payment. This was used to penalise one college that did not meet the standards in the service level agreement. Most learners work for small to medium-sized engineering companies, where training resources are satisfactory. At larger companies, training resources are much better.



**16. TNT does much to encourage learners' career and personal development.**

Engineering ability is recognised and learners are encouraged to reach their full potential. Many learners go on to take higher national certificate and diploma qualifications. Some go on to take degrees and master's degrees. New learners know about the support given by TNT and some aspire to go to university from the start. TNT has helped some learners to develop language skills and cultural understanding. Other learners have received help in developing their skills in leadership, problem solving and teamwork. TNT has put much time and effort into enabling apprentices facing redundancy to finish their apprenticeship.

**17. Internal and external communications remain good.** Good informal contact with subcontractors, employers and learners has become more formal and has improved. In particular, the recording of meetings has improved. Most minutes of meetings are detailed and show action points and responsibilities. However, many action points do not have dates. Some records do not show whether actions have been followed up.

**18.** Business planning is now satisfactory. TNT has a detailed business plan with links to self-assessment and development planning. The executive committee is regularly involved in planning and strategy. TNT is recruiting new members to increase the number of women and people from minority ethnic groups on its executive committee. Self-assessment remains satisfactory.

**19.** Management information remains satisfactory. Learners' progress is thoroughly recorded on various spreadsheets and regularly monitored. TNT has not yet followed plans to integrate this data into a single management information system. Arrangements for monitoring health and safety remain satisfactory.

**20.** Arrangements for staff appraisal are now satisfactory. All TNT staff have now been appraised, and all but one has had a six-month review. However, staff development is not explicitly linked to company objectives.

**21.** The strategy for additional support is now satisfactory. A standard test is used to measure the literacy and numeracy of all learners at induction and the results are given to learners and the subcontracted colleges. The colleges provide additional learning sessions for specific areas of learning and individual support during ordinary learning sessions. The strategy for additional support is new and TNT recognises the need for further improvements.

**22. TNT is involved in a range of partnerships to widen participation.** Initiatives include events for girls where women engineers from TNT's employers make good contributions. Other activities prepare young people for work through mock interviews and presentations about apprenticeship programmes. This year, two applicants from minority ethnic groups were successful, but no women applied for apprenticeships.

**23.** TNT's strategy to promote equality and diversity is now satisfactory. All staff have received good training in equality and diversity. Inductions, progress reviews and the

## TYNE NORTH TRAINING LIMITED REINSPECTION

monitoring of employers have improved and many policies and procedures have been updated. TNT has newly built premises that have an induction hearing loop and are fully accessible for people who use wheelchairs.

**24. The reinforcement of learners' understanding of equality of opportunity is insufficiently established.** Improvements in the coverage of equality of opportunity at inductions and progress reviews are recent. Some learners' understanding is weak.

**25. Much effective work has been done to improve quality assurance since the previous inspection.** TNT now has thorough paperwork and systems to cover all the main aspects of learners' programmes. Every area of weakness from the previous inspection has improved. TNT recognises that some aspects of quality assurance are not yet well established and is continuing to make improvements. There is not yet a planned quality cycle showing the timing of each process and ensuring all activities are linked in an efficient way.

### Leadership and management

#### Strengths

- good management of subcontractors
- particularly good encouragement of learners' career and personal development
- good communications
- good involvement in partnerships to widen participation
- many effective developments to improve quality

#### Weaknesses

- insufficiently established reinforcement of learners' understanding of equality of opportunity

## **Engineering, technology & manufacturing**

### ***Mechanical engineering***

#### *Strengths*

- very good achievement rates
- broad range of additional qualifications achieved
- good on-the-job training
- particularly effective support for learners

#### *Weaknesses*

- weak use of individual learning plans

### ***Electrical engineering***

#### *Strengths*

- very good achievement rates
- broad range of additional qualifications achieved
- good on-the-job training
- particularly effective support for learners

#### *Weaknesses*

- weak use of individual learning plans

### ***Manufacturing***

#### *Strengths*

- very good achievement rates
- broad range of additional qualifications achieved
- good on-the-job training
- particularly effective support for learners

#### *Weaknesses*

- weak use of individual learning plans

***Other contributory areas***

*Strengths*

- very good achievement rates
- broad range of additional qualifications achieved
- good on-the-job training
- particularly effective support for learners

*Weaknesses*

- weak use of individual learning plans

## DETAILED REINSPECTION FINDING

### LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

### Grade 2

#### Strengths

- good management of subcontractors
- particularly good encouragement of learners' career and personal development
- good communications
- good involvement in partnerships to widen participation
- many effective developments to improve quality

#### Weaknesses

- insufficiently established reinforcement of learners' understanding of equality of opportunity

26. TNT now manages its subcontractors well. A clear and detailed service level agreement describes what is expected of each party. TNT meets its subcontractors every two months to resolve problems and discuss changes. Subcontractors produce regular, detailed reports about learners' progress. These are well used to guide discussion at progress reviews. Arrangements to assure the quality of teaching and learning include observation of teaching at one college by TNT's staff three times each year. The other college provides reports of its own observations of teaching. Subcontractors are set targets that are clearly linked to payment. This was used to penalise one college when certificates were not issued as required by the service level agreement. The service level agreements include arrangements for TNT to provide initial assessment and for the colleges to provide support with literacy, numeracy and language. However, one college did not get the results of the literacy and numeracy tests early enough to provide support from the start of learners' programmes.

27. TNT does much to encourage learners' career and personal development. TNT manages its finances well and has secured extra funding from outside sources, such as a local trust fund. It has used the available money to provide good financial support for learners. Engineering ability is recognised and learners are encouraged to reach their full potential. Many learners go on to take higher national certificate and diploma qualifications. Some go on to take degrees and master's degrees. One past learner who left school with one general certificate of secondary education is now taking a master's degree. New learners are made fully aware of this support from the start of their apprenticeship and some aspire to go to university from the start. Some past learners said that they would not have been able to complete higher education without this support. Some learners have been assisted with different activities. One was supported in making a study trip to Japan to learn the language and explore the culture. Two were sponsored to participate in the Northeast team for the first leg of the tall ships race. TNT has recently introduced a residential outdoor activity course for apprentices in their third

#### TYNE NORTH TRAINING LIMITED REINSPECTION

and fourth year of training to develop their skills in leadership, problem solving and teamwork. The company plans to offer this opportunity to apprentices every year. TNT responded effectively when a large employer wanted to make its apprentices redundant. Much time and effort was spent negotiating funding arrangements that would enable the apprentices to finish their training.

28. Internal and external communications remain good. Good informal contact with subcontractors, employers and learners has improved by becoming more formal. In particular, the recording of meetings has improved. Regular weekly meetings for all staff ensure that they are kept well informed about developments. Most minutes of meetings are detailed and show action points and responsibilities. However, many action points do not have dates. Some records do not show whether actions have been followed up. TNT has launched a website and has greatly improved its other marketing materials. In 2005, 42 per cent of applications were made through the website.

29. Business planning is now satisfactory. TNT has a detailed business plan with links to self-assessment and development planning. Clear and measurable targets have been set for development, and budgets have been agreed for key areas of business activity. The executive committee advises the management team rather than setting strategic direction, but it is adequately involved in planning. The chair has a satisfactory involvement in management decisions. Members of the executive committee have a satisfactory range of experience and expertise, particularly in shop-floor issues. At the moment, there are no women on the executive committee and no members of minority ethnic groups. TNT is aware of this problem and is recruiting new members.

30. Management information remains satisfactory. Learners' progress is thoroughly recorded on various spreadsheets and regularly monitored. TNT has not yet followed plans to integrate this data into a single management information system.

31. At the previous inspection, arrangements for monitoring health and safety were satisfactory. They remained satisfactory at the reinspection.

32. Arrangements for staff appraisal are now satisfactory. TNT has a written procedure for continuing professional development. All TNT's staff have now been appraised and all except the manager have had a six-monthly review. Several staff are involved in staff development but this is not clearly linked to the company's objectives.

33. The strategy for additional support is now satisfactory. A standard test is used to measure the literacy and numeracy of all learners at induction. Two staff have been trained in using the test and will share their knowledge with all other staff. The results of initial assessment are given to learners and the subcontracted colleges. The colleges provide additional learning sessions for specific areas of learning and individual support during ordinary learning sessions. The additional support strategy is new and TNT is aware of the need for further improvements. For example, one college did not receive the initial assessment results until six weeks into the programme and some of its learners were unable to receive support from the start.

**Equality of opportunity****Contributory grade 3**

34. Good links with local partnerships, such as education and business partnerships, involve TNT in various initiatives to widen participation. A yearly event to encourage girls into engineering is becoming established. Women engineers from TNT's employers make good contributions to raise girls' awareness of career opportunities. TNT and its employers take part in a day to raise awareness of the industries around the River Tyne. As a member of a work-based learning network, TNT has arranged work experience and workplace visits for 26 pupils in year 10. In another initiative, TNT helps to prepare young people for work through mock interviews and sessions to raise awareness of apprenticeship programmes.

35. TNT monitors applications from different groups. This year, there were two applicants from minority ethnic groups and both were successful. No women applied for apprenticeships this year.

36. TNT's strategy to promote equality and diversity is now satisfactory. All staff have received good training in equality and diversity. The materials from this and DVDs from the LSC form the basis of current resources. Many policies and procedures have been updated to reflect relevant legislation. Quality assurance processes now include a yearly review and updating of this material.

37. Inductions now cover equality and diversity thoroughly. The relevant legislation is explained and examples are given that relate to individual learners. However, much of this is done using computer-aided presentations. Few other methods are used. A video is used to explore specific issues. Equality and diversity goals are now displayed on training room walls alongside quality and health and safety goals. TNT has revised its publicity materials, which now contain a balanced range of images. TNT now has a recruitment and selection policy and procedure to ensure fair practice.

38. The procedure for vetting employers has been revised to include equality and diversity checks. These have the same importance in the procedure as health and safety checks and checks of employers' ability to provide learning opportunities to level 3 NVQ. TNT plans to use these three areas to create individual action plans for companies to ensure the best placements for learners. This is a new process and it is too soon to judge its impact.

39. The newly built premises are now in use. These have an induction hearing loop and are fully accessible for people who use wheelchairs.

40. TNT recognises that the reinforcement of learners' understanding of equality of opportunity is insufficiently established. Progress reviews have been improved in 2005. Learners are now asked various open questions to test their understanding at different stages of their programme. However, this is quite a new process and some learners' understanding is weak. Some new learners remember the equality of opportunity aspect of their induction well. However, others do not remember the coverage of equality of opportunity at their induction or at progress reviews. The new questions have not yet

sufficiently improved the understanding of learners who have been in training for some time.

### **Quality assurance**

### **Contributory grade 3**

41. Much effective work has been done to improve quality assurance processes and paperwork since the previous inspection. TNT now has thorough paperwork to cover all the main learning processes. Clear flowcharts show each procedure. These are cross-referenced to related procedures. Paperwork is dated and systematically reviewed. Quality systems are thoroughly audited to ensure compliance and improvement. Every area of weakness from the previous inspection has improved.

42. The quality assurance system has been reviewed and some further improvements have already been made. For example, progress reviews have recently improved. Learners' progress is now recorded well. Questions about health and safety and equality of opportunity are more thorough and the answers are recorded. Progress reviews now make good use of reports from subcontractors. For example, the subcontractors reported that learners on the fabrication programme were handing assignments in late. This problem was dealt with and learners are now handing in their assignments on time. A yearly quality management review has taken place once. All the main findings of the first round of quality assurance were reviewed and used to set new goals.

43. Teaching is observed thoroughly. Observations cover all the main aspects of learners' programmes such as assessment, testing procedures, and reviews of learning. Paperwork is designed to meet the goals of all the main processes. Both internal training and subcontracted training are observed. TNT has an effective partnership with another training provider which reduces the number of external observations at one subcontractor. The partners benefit from the reduced workload and from using the staff best suited to specific observations. TNT observes engineering training and the partner observes key skills. Improvements were made after one key skills session was graded inadequate and both providers met with the subcontractor to discuss performance. Clear feedback is given to the tutors after observations and action points are given. However, the action points do not have dates and it is not clear whether they are followed up.

44. Internal verification is now satisfactory. Internal verification and assessment procedures are clear. TNT has clear written procedures for planning and sampling. Monthly standardisation meetings are held and good practice is shared. Work-based assessors attend some of these meetings. Good progress has been made in standardising portfolio-building.

45. The collection and use of feedback are now better established. Questionnaires are supported by interviews and the results are evaluated. It is becoming a well-established practice to evaluate each event. The results are used in self-assessment.

46. Self-assessment remains satisfactory. The action plan produced after the previous inspection sets clear targets. These have been regularly reviewed and updated. The



most recent self-assessment was produced in February 2005. It is well structured and self-critical, but does not reflect some of the more recent improvements found by inspectors.

47. The provider recognises that some aspects of quality assurance are not yet well established and is continuing to make improvements. For example, the quality manager reviews all the new progress review forms to check that they are completed fully. There is not yet an agreed quality cycle that shows the timing of each process and ensures that the different processes link together in an efficient way.

## AREAS OF LEARNING

### Engineering, technology & manufacturing

Engineering, technology & manufacturing		2
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
<b><i>Mechanical engineering</i></b> - Apprenticeships for young people	56	2
<b><i>Electrical engineering</i></b> - Apprenticeships for young people	46	2
<b><i>Manufacturing</i></b> - Apprenticeships for young people	94	2
<b><i>Other contributory areas</i></b> - Apprenticeships for young people	31	2

#### ***Mechanical engineering***

##### *Strengths*

- very good achievement rates
- broad range of additional qualifications achieved
- good on-the-job training
- particularly effective support for learners

##### *Weaknesses*

- weak use of individual learning plans

#### ***Electrical engineering***

##### *Strengths*

- very good achievement rates
- broad range of additional qualifications achieved
- good on-the-job training
- particularly effective support for learners

##### *Weaknesses*

- weak use of individual learning plans

## ***Manufacturing***

### *Strengths*

- very good achievement rates
- broad range of additional qualifications achieved
- good on-the-job training
- particularly effective support for learners

### *Weaknesses*

- weak use of individual learning plans

## ***Other contributory areas***

### *Strengths*

- very good achievement rates
- broad range of additional qualifications achieved
- good on-the-job training
- particularly effective support for learners

### *Weaknesses*

- weak use of individual learning plans

## **Achievement and standards**

48. For programmes that started in 1999-2000 and 2000-01, which are now complete, 71 out of 80 learners completed the advanced apprenticeship framework. This represents an 89 per cent completion rate for advanced apprenticeships, which is very good for this area of learning. This rate is being maintained. In 2001-02, 39 learners started. Thirty-one of these have completed the apprenticeship and the seven who are still in training are making satisfactory progress towards completing it. Learners now make good progress towards completing their frameworks within their intended timescale. Effective action has been taken to deal with the slow progress identified in the previous inspection and slow progress is no longer a significant weakness. Learners' written work is satisfactory. Portfolios are well compiled and presented. Learners produce good practical work in the workplace and in their off-the-job activities.

49. Learners achieve a broad range of additional qualifications. This strength was identified at the previous inspection and has been enhanced. Learners complete a skills analysis at the employers' premises to identify additional learning opportunities. Examples of additional training include lift truck training, basic health and safety training, and training towards qualifications in manual handling, welding and electrical regulations. Many learners are achieving higher-level qualifications, including some at degree level.

## Quality of education and training

50. TNT continues to provide a good range of on-the-job training activities. This strength has been maintained since the previous inspection. Learners work at a wide range of tasks and develop good practical skills. Their activities include machine operations, electrical installation and maintenance of complex machinery, mechanical repairs to ships, cranes and lift trucks, welding and fabrication, and pipefitting operations. Learners generally receive training for a set time in different departments and in different processes which increase in complexity. The time spent in each area can be changed to suit the learner or employer. This allows good skills to be developed at a pace suited to the individual learner. Each learner has a workplace mentor to provide guidance and support. Learners produce good work in real conditions and often use high-technology equipment. Employers speak positively about the great improvements in learners' work during their training.

51. Support for learners is particularly effective. The good support identified at the previous inspection has been enhanced. TNT's training officers visit learners at work every day or every week. Training and pastoral issues are discussed during these visits. Learners are encouraged to contact training officers in between these visits if they need to. Learners are confident to approach training officers and are confident that any problems will be dealt with sympathetically and efficiently. Learners expressed a high regard for training staff and the support they receive. Learners receive financial incentives from TNT and their employers. Two learners have been given money to travel overseas and carry out engineering projects. Staff respond well to learners' concerns. Some employers provide time within the working week for learners to do NVQ work.

52. The range of programmes and qualifications offered meets learners' aspirations. Employers' needs are also considered when programmes are selected. Most learners work for small to medium-sized engineering companies, where training resources are satisfactory. At larger companies, training resources are much better. TNT's staff are experienced and well qualified. Their training skills are satisfactory. TNT's training staff have increased their efforts to develop the skills of work-based assessors.

53. Assessment has improved since the previous inspection. Assessment and internal verification are now satisfactory and adequately planned. Learners and employers know what will be assessed when. Assessors use a good mixture of assessment by observation and witness testimony. Some companies have qualified work-based assessors and others have staff who are working towards assessors' qualifications. In one company a member of the training staff is working towards a qualification in internal verification.

54. The teaching and assessment of key skills has improved since the previous inspection and is satisfactory. Tyne Metropolitan College and South Tyneside College are subcontracted to teach key skills. Learners are now taught key skills from early in their training programme. Learners are aware of key skills and their role in the training programme. The recording of learners' key skills achievements has improved. Staff and learners now understand what learners must do to make progress. Learners' previous achievements and qualifications are now recognised and used to gain exemption from

key skills tests. TNT is monitoring the subcontracted colleges more effectively. At one college all the learners except one completed key skills within their first year.

55. Initial assessment is now satisfactory. All new learners are tested to identify a suitable training programme and any additional learning needs including needs for literacy and numeracy support. However, some learners are not tested until several weeks into their programme. TNT has recognised this weakness and is arranging for all learners to be fully assessed at the start of the programme. The new arrangements have not yet been fully introduced and their effect has yet to be felt. The subcontracted colleges provide additional learning support, although very few learners require it. The strategy for additional support is now satisfactory.

56. Individual learning plans are weak and are not regularly updated. They do not give a detailed account of learners' progress. They provide details of the learners and describe the content of the learner's training programme but learners' achievements and changes to their programmes are not always recorded. Learners' progress reviews are well recorded and other documents exist that record learners' progress and achievement. However, these are not included in learners' file or attached to the individual learning plan. It is difficult to get a full picture of learners' progress.

## **Leadership and management**

57. Managers regularly review the programmes and identify areas that require improvement. The key weaknesses identified at the previous inspection have been put right. Action has also been taken to build on strengths. Internal communications are good. Staff understand their roles and responsibilities. Staff were involved in producing the self-assessment report and the action plan produced after the previous inspection. The judgements reflect the strengths and weaknesses identified at the previous inspection and do not reflect important improvements that have been made. Equality of opportunity is now introduced at induction and reinforced at progress reviews. Newer learners have a satisfactory awareness of equality of opportunity and health and safety. However, learners who have been on the programme for longer do not have a good recollection of the reinforcement of equality of opportunity at progress reviews.