

# REINSPECTION REPORT

## **ETEC (Sunderland) Limited Reinspection**

**09 November 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.

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## **ETEC (Sunderland) Limited Reinspection**

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## REINSPECTION REPORT

### DESCRIPTION OF THE PROVIDER

1. ETEC (Sunderland) Limited (ETEC) was established in 1991 to provide education and training within the local community, focusing on the needs of the excluded or marginalised. It has three training sites, all in the Hendon area of Sunderland. ETEC is a registered company operating on a not-for-profit basis. It currently offers apprenticeships and national vocational qualifications (NVQs) in construction, business administration and information technology (IT). It provides New Deal programmes in construction, business administration, retailing, hospitality, health and social care, and media. Some of these areas had too few participants to be inspected separately at the previous inspection in September 2004. ETEC is also a partner in the Tyne and Wear Learning and Skills Council's (LSC) Employer Training Pilot (ETP) through which it provides NVQs in construction, business administration and foundation studies. ETEC established an Entry to Employment (E2E) programme in 2003 which is subcontracted with a local consortium but which was not included in the previous inspection.

2. ETEC is managed overall by a chief executive who is accountable to a board of four non-executive directors. Day-to-day management is carried out by an operations manager and a team of six managers who are responsible for managing each of the company's occupational areas. The senior management team meets fortnightly and reports to the chief executive. The board of directors meets every two months to discuss the company's performance and development. They also hold meetings twice a year with the management team and all staff. ETEC's training provision is funded through Tyne and Wear LSC and Jobcentre Plus. ETEC also carries out many local projects, including some with funding from the European Social Fund, the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund and the Single Regeneration Budget. ETEC has helped establish partnerships involving voluntary and community groups in Sunderland and has been involved in a range of pilot schemes with local agencies.

3. The local area in which ETEC works, and from which most of the learners are recruited, is one of significant disadvantage. Hendon was designated a New Deal for Communities area in 2001. In 2003, some 61 per cent of the local population lived in households where no-one was in paid employment. In 2004, the proportion of school leavers in Sunderland achieving five or more general certificates of secondary education at grade C or above was 44.2 per cent, compared with an average of 53.7 per cent for England.

### SCOPE OF PROVISION

#### Construction

4. ETEC has 18 learners on construction programmes. One is an advanced apprentice, nine are apprentices and six learners are working solely towards level 2 NVQs. The remaining two learners are working towards level 2 NVQs on EQ8, which is an ETP

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scheme for the Northeast designed to help companies develop their businesses. There were no Jobcentre Plus-funded participants at the time of the reinspection. NVQs are delivered on the job on various construction projects, with ETEC's tutors visiting learners on site and carrying out work-based assessment. Off-the-job training for bricklaying and painting and decorating is carried out at ETEC's training centre. Most off-the-job training is delivered on a day-release basis. Apprentices are working towards technical certificates and key skills qualifications as required by their frameworks. Most of ETEC's learners live in Sunderland and are recruited by Connexions or Jobcentre Plus. ETEC's staff support and monitor the learners' progress. The length of training for each trade varies but the average is 42 months for advanced apprenticeships and 18 months for apprenticeships and NVQs.

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

5. ETEC provides apprenticeships in business administration and IT. At the time of the reinspection, five learners were following a business administration apprenticeship and four were following apprenticeships in information and communications technology (ICT). The apprentices work towards a level 2 NVQ technical certificate and key skills as required by their frameworks. ETEC had no Jobcentre Plus-funded participants at the time of the inspection. Apprentices are placed in a variety of organisations as trainees to support the completion of their qualification. These include charities, a community association, the local authority, schools and a variety of local companies. All learners receive off-the-job training at ETEC to support their development of occupational and employability skills. They attend weekly structured sessions where they receive training in portfolio-building, key skills and the technical certificate. Some learners attend enhancement workshops to improve their skills in various software packages such as word processing, spreadsheets and electronic presentations. Assessors from ETEC visit learners regularly to carry out assessments in the workplace.

## **ABOUT THE REINSPECTION**

Number of inspectors	3
Number of inspection days	12
Number of learners interviewed	21
Number of staff interviewed	18
Number of employers interviewed	3
Number of locations/sites/learning centres visited	6
Number of partners/external agencies interviewed	3
Number of visits	6

## OVERALL JUDGEMENT

6. The previous inspection of September 2004 found that provision was unsatisfactory in construction, and in business administration, management and professional. ETEC's leadership and management and arrangements for quality assurance were also unsatisfactory, although its approach to equality of opportunity was satisfactory. At the end of the reinspection process all aspects of the provision that were reinspected were 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>Construction</b>		<b>4</b>
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
<b>Construction crafts</b>		
- Apprenticeships for young people	39	4
- Other government-funded provision	5	None
- New Deal for young people	1	None

<b>Business administration, management &amp; professional</b>		<b>4</b>
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
<b>Business administration</b>		
- Other government-funded provision	10	None
- New Deal for young people	7	None
- Apprenticeships for young people	5	4

*Grades awarded at reinspection*

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

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<b>Construction</b>		<b>3</b>
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
<b>Construction crafts</b>		
- Apprenticeships for young people	10	3
- Other government-funded provision	6	3
- Employer training pilot	2	3

<b>Business administration, management &amp; professional</b>		<b>3</b>
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
<b>Business administration</b>		
- Apprenticeships for young people	9	3

## KEY FINDINGS

### Achievement and standards

7. The apprenticeship framework completion rate in construction has improved since the previous inspection and is now satisfactory. Seven additional frameworks, two at advanced level and five at apprenticeship level, have been completed in the past year. The achievement rate on NVQ programmes has also improved, with 22 learners achieving their level 2 NVQ in the same period. Retention rates have improved. Of the 25 learners who started construction programmes in 2004-05, 18 remain in learning. Learners are now making satisfactory progress towards their qualifications.

8. The apprenticeship framework completion rate in business administration and IT has improved. ETEC had 22 learners at the time of the previous inspection. Of these, seven were participants on New Deal programmes. Six of these seven have now completed their learning plans and two have gained employment. Of the five apprentices in learning at the previous inspection, three have completed their framework and one is still in learning. Ninety-one per cent of the business administration learners who were following a level 2 NVQ achieved their qualification. Retention is satisfactory. Since the previous inspection, eight learners have started apprenticeships, with six of them remaining in learning. Learners who are still in learning are making satisfactory progress.

### Quality of education and training

Grades awarded to learning sessions

	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Total
Construction	0	1	2	0	3
Business administration, management & professional	0	1	1	0	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>5</b>



9. **The delivery of key skills training is good on construction programmes.** Learners now start key skills training early in their programme. Key skills tutors have developed a number of projects that are related to construction activities and there is good co-ordination between key skills staff and construction staff. Some learners on apprenticeship programmes have achieved key skills units at a higher level than that required by their frameworks.

10. **Learners in construction gain good and varied off-the-job experience from the building projects which ETEC carries out.** Learners are involved in the refurbishment of local community buildings and in improvements to the environment. This has enabled learners to develop good practical skills and has increased opportunities to provide evidence and assessment in the workplace. Advanced apprentices are now able to experience aspects of site supervision.

11. **Learners in business administration and IT develop good workplace skills.** They understand their role within their respective companies and develop the skills and knowledge required to carry out their jobs effectively. They make good use of IT and carry out a wide range of business activities using modern office equipment and technology. Learners develop confidence and self-esteem as they do their job. Employers' involvement in training is good.

12. **Tutors and learning support staff provide the learners with very good formal and informal support.** ETEC has a dedicated youth development team which provides advice, guidance and personal support to learners. Each learner is assigned a dedicated youth worker over the period of their training. The youth workers provide effective support which has enabled some learners to overcome personal problems. Learners gave many examples of how staff had helped to develop their confidence and self-esteem. The high level of support provided motivates learners to continue with their programmes, enables them to make good progress and achieve their qualifications and has developed a very positive environment for training.

13. Learners receive satisfactory initial guidance and advice. Their induction is satisfactory and covers an introduction to ETEC, the programmes of study, health and safety, and equality and diversity.

14. Off-the-job training is satisfactory. Most tutors are adequately prepared and organised. Aims and objectives are set for each session and learners understand what is expected of them. Training in most sessions motivates and challenges the learners to extend their range of skills. Learners work at their own pace and tutors are very effective in providing individual support.

15. Since the previous inspection, ETEC has made many improvements to the training facilities. The construction trades centre now offers good off-the-job training facilities for learners in bricklaying and painting and decorating. The training area for wood occupations is currently being upgraded to provide a suitable training environment.

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16. Resources are satisfactory in business administration and IT. The training rooms are well lit, clean and professionally presented. There are 23 computer workstations and a range of textbooks, videos and learning activity packs. However, learners are not encouraged to borrow learning resources to support independent learning activities.

17. Progress reviews have been improved since the previous inspection and are now satisfactory. ETEC has developed and implemented a new procedure for progress reviews. Realistic and measurable targets are set during the review. The review process is now effectively used to appraise and develop the learners' understanding of issues relating to health and safety and equality of opportunity.

18. Assessment practices are thorough. They include assessment planning and the briefing of learners to confirm their understanding. Learners' portfolios are satisfactory, containing suitable standards of work with an adequate range of evidence.

19. ETEC has made significant improvements to health and safety practices since the previous inspection. It has placed all construction companies in categories according to risk levels and pays them thorough quarterly monitoring visits. All learners receive site inductions in their first week of on-the-job training. All staff have completed or are working towards an externally accredited 'managing safely' qualification.

20. **Learners' progress is not sufficiently monitored in business administration and IT.** Assessors do not sufficiently follow learners' ongoing progress between the targets they have been set. Learners do not have a specific record showing the total qualification framework and their progress within each aspect of this. Some learners do not have a clear understanding of how much of their qualification they have achieved so far and how much they have left to complete.

### **Leadership and management**

21. **ETEC has good strategic and business planning.** The board of directors and management team have developed particularly effective and clear strategies to develop the company while maintaining its strong commitment to community development and education in the Sunderland area. Strategic planning involves all staff. ETEC's business plan covers a three-year period and identifies overall strategic direction in line with its mission of tackling poverty and inequality. Strategic and development targets are clearly identified, including improvements in learners' recruitment and success rates, business development, capital investment and finance. ETEC is making good progress towards dealing with many of the issues in the development plan.

22. **ETEC has developed an effective staff training and development policy** which is communicated well to staff. This ensures good staff training and development. The company has a strong commitment to help staff improve, develop their performance and gain additional qualifications. Key activities targeted for staff training have been clearly linked to ETEC's strategic priorities. During the past year, all staff have taken part in training and personal development activities. Staff have gained skills and confidence through the training and are in turn providing a better service to learners.

**23. ETEC effectively promotes equality of opportunity, participation and progression into learning.** It lives up to its aims that all prospective learners should be offered a place if it can provide appropriate training and support. The company has been successful in widening participation among learners with specific support needs, by effectively removing obstacles to their learning. Recent marketing materials have positively projected diversity and have widened participation among learners from minority ethnic groups. ETEC has established numerous partnerships and projects which have been very effective in widening participation for the most disadvantaged young people in the area. Several learners with disabilities have progressed into employment through a project run by ETEC.

**24. The company's analysis and use of data on equality of opportunity and diversity is good.** Data is effectively collected and analysed, and is presented in tabular and graphical format. The data covers recruitment of under-represented groups including minority ethnic groups, women by area of learning and learners with disabilities. Data on equality of opportunity also covers learning and the progress learners are making. Examples include achievement by men and women, achievement by minority ethnic group members, compared with other learners and the achievement by learners with disabilities, compared with able-bodied learners. Achievement rates for these groups compare favourably with those of other learners. ETEC's analysis of data on equality of opportunity has assisted in the setting of new targets which will contribute positively to the LSC's equality and diversity impact measures. The data has supported management decisions on recruitment, marketing, external links, partnerships and the design and delivery of the training.

**25. ETEC has introduced particularly effective actions to bring about improvements.** A quality improvement handbook is in place. The handbook has detailed procedures and flow charts for key processes for learners, many of which were missing at the previous inspection, and also for organisation, finance and administration. There are 16 key processes for learners, which effectively cover all the important aspects of the learners' experience. A quality improvement plan has recently been introduced which draws together the post-inspection action plan and the most recent self-assessment report. Overall retention and achievement rates have improved and most learners are making satisfactory progress. Performance is also satisfactory on the E2E and New Deal programmes, which were not included in the reinspection.

26. Support for learners' literacy, numeracy and language skills is good. ETEC has an effective strategy which emphasises citizenship, widening participation and support. All learners receive effective initial and diagnostic assessment which accurately identifies their support needs. Most learners are making good progress and many improve their literacy and numeracy by at least two levels.

27. Internal communications are effective. A wide range of regular meetings involves staff in the strategic decision-making process and key development activities and ensures that they are kept fully informed of company business.

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28. Planning and management of training overall is satisfactory. ETEC has a satisfactory range of policies covering all aspects of the business. Financial management, staff appraisals and management of resources are satisfactory.

29. ETEC has improved the management of business administration and IT programmes since the previous inspection. Communications and staff training are good.

30. Two of ETEC's three sites are fully accessible to people with restricted mobility, and have disabled toilets. Currently one learner has mobility difficulties. Over the past year all staff have completed training in equality and diversity, the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and dyslexia awareness. A procedure for compliments and praise has been developed. ETEC has dealt appropriately with the small number of complaints made.

31. Observations of teaching and learning have been carried out on all staff. Sixty per cent of teaching observed has been graded good or better. Collection and use of employers' and learners' feedback is satisfactory. Internal verification is satisfactory.

32. The self-assessment process is satisfactory. All directors, staff and learners are effectively involved. The self-assessment report effectively identifies most of the strengths and weaknesses identified at the reinspection. The report is suitably critical and evaluative and the grades given in it are realistic.

33. **Employers' engagement in the promotion and delivery of training is weak.** ETEC has no strategy to encourage the development of links with employers and secure their effective involvement. Links with employers in business administration and IT are insufficiently developed. ETEC does not have a central strategy for recruiting employers to engage with the training, take on apprentices and provide work placements. The number of learners in business administration and IT is low and declining.

34. Co-ordination between on- and off-the-job training in construction is insufficiently developed. Training in the workplace is mostly unplanned and only reflects the programme of work being carried out by the employer. Employers are generally unaware of the training that learners receive in the construction centre. Learners' progress is sometimes delayed as they are unable to develop the workplace skills that are needed to achieve the NVQ.

35. **ETEC makes insufficient use of data to monitor each learners' progress.** The company has developed a satisfactory range of reports which keep managers and staff informed of recruitment, retention and achievement rates. However, not enough reports are available which enable managers and staff to monitor each learner's performance. Vocational and key skills tutors hold records in learners' portfolios which identify the units of a learner's programme and those which have been completed to date. However, no reports draw this information together along with other essential requirements of the apprenticeship frameworks which learners are following. A new report which shows each learner's progress has recently been produced for some programmes. It is too early to judge the effectiveness of the new report.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Strengths**

- good strategic and business planning
- good staff training and development
- particularly effective actions to bring about improvements
- good promotion of equality of opportunity
- effective use and analysis of data on equality of opportunity

### **Weaknesses**

- insufficient use of data to monitor each learner's progress
- insufficient engagement of employers

## **Construction**

### ***Construction crafts***

#### *Strengths*

- good delivery of key skills qualifications
- good use of project work
- very good support for learners

#### *Weaknesses*

- insufficient co-ordination between on- and off-the-job training

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

### ***Business administration***

#### *Strengths*

- good development of workplace skills
- very good support for learners

#### *Weaknesses*

- insufficient monitoring of learners' progress
- weak links with employers

## DETAILED REINSPECTION FINDING

### LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Grade 3

#### Strengths

- good strategic and business planning
- good staff training and development
- particularly effective actions to bring about improvements
- good promotion of equality of opportunity
- effective use and analysis of data on equality of opportunity

#### Weaknesses

- insufficient use of data to monitor each learner's progress
- insufficient engagement of employers

36. ETEC has good strategic and business planning. The board of directors and management team have developed particularly effective and clear strategies to develop the company while maintaining its strong commitment to community development and education in the Sunderland area. Strategic planning involves all staff, who are effectively consulted through twice-yearly staff development days. An effective accommodation strategy has enabled ETEC to purchase new properties and build new premises for its head office in Hendon. The new building has provided a custom-designed construction training area which is of great benefit to learners. ETEC has established a construction company and is currently carrying out small works projects in the community. Learners gain good work experience and skills through these projects at the same time as improving the local environment. ETEC's business plan covers a three-year period and identifies overall strategic direction in line with its mission of tackling poverty and inequality. Strategic and development targets are clearly identified including improvements in learners' recruitment and success rates, business development, capital investment and finance. From the business plan ETEC has produced an annual development action plan which effectively identifies issues arising from the inspection and self-assessment. Good progress is being made towards dealing with many of the issues in the development plan. All staff understand the importance of the development plan and are committed to its success.

37. ETEC has developed an effective staff training and development policy which is communicated well to staff. This ensures good staff training and development. The company has a strong commitment to help staff improve, develop their performance and gain additional qualifications. Personal development and training are discussed during annual appraisals between staff and their line managers. Staff are actively encouraged to develop themselves. Key activities targeted for staff training have been clearly linked to ETEC's strategic priorities. During the past year, all staff have taken part in personal development activities. Eighteen staff have completed a total of 26 qualifications, 17 at

level 3 or 4. All delivery staff at ETEC have teacher training qualifications at level 3, and four staff have achieved or are working such qualifications at level 4. Seven staff have achieved assessor awards and two are working towards them. Four staff have internal verifier awards and one is working towards them. All of the management team members at ETEC have achieved relevant management qualifications at level 4 and 5. Recent in-house training has covered self-assessment, learners' reviews, target-setting and the use of individual learning plans. Staff have gained skills and confidence through the training and are in turn providing a better service to learners. ETEC has held a national award which recognises the training and development of staff since 1995.

38. Internal communications are effective. A wide range of regular meetings involves staff in the strategic decision-making process and key development activities and ensures that they are kept fully informed of company business. Directors meet with managers and staff twice a year. The management team meets fortnightly and there is a strong focus on learners' rates of progress, achievement and improvement. An annual cycle of reporting ensures all key strategic and development issues are reported on and discussed. Minutes are adequately recorded. Learners' progress and performance against targets is reviewed at monthly staff meetings. External communications are satisfactory. A bimonthly newsletter is produced and circulated to all learners, employers and other external agencies. The newsletter celebrates learners' achievements and reports on company developments.

39. Support for learners' literacy, numeracy and language skills is good. ETEC has an effective strategy which emphasises citizenship, widening participation and support. All learners receive effective initial and diagnostic assessment which accurately identifies their support needs. Some 65 per cent of current learners are identified as requiring additional support. The support programme is negotiated with the learners and provided by well-qualified specialist staff. Two staff members are qualified to carry out dyslexia screening and another member of staff is qualified to provide literacy support for learners with dyslexia. ETEC currently has five learners with dyslexia or dyspraxia. Detailed records are kept of the support provided. All learners are reassessed every six months, when support plans are updated. All vocational staff are currently taking a basic skills support qualification. Most learners are making good progress and many improve their literacy and numeracy skills by at least two levels. Interpreters are provided for Bangladeshi learners who speak English as an additional language.

40. ETEC has a satisfactory range of policies covering all aspects of the business. It reviews these on a three-yearly cycle. Financial management is satisfactory. Better use is made of financial forecasting than at the previous inspection. Directors receive the monthly accounts on income and expenditure and monitor the company's financial position effectively.

41. Staff appraisals are satisfactory. All staff have an annual staff appraisal with their line manager, which set targets for learners' rates of recruitment, retention, achievement and progression. Most targets are challenging and relate well to ETEC's quality improvement agenda. Progress towards targets is reviewed formally every six months.

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42. Management of resources is satisfactory. ETEC has good accommodation at two sites and it plans to refurbish the other site at Lombard Street. All learners have access to computers with modern software, as well as access to satisfactory tools and equipment.

43. The engagement of employers in the promotion and delivery of the training is weak. ETEC has no strategy to encourage the development of links with employers and secure their effective involvement. Staff within course teams try to promote the training to employers and develop better links with industry but this is not centrally co-ordinated. Course teams and individual staff are set no targets to rectify this issue. Although employers have recently been asked for feedback on the quality of training, most are not sufficiently involved in the planning and delivery of the training in the workplace. In construction, co-ordination between on- and off-the-job training is insufficiently developed and the progress of some learners is slowed. In business administration and IT, links with employers are weak in the recruitment of learners and development of the training. The numbers of learners are low and declining. On the E2E programme, few learners benefit from placements with employers.

### **Equality of opportunity**

### **Contributory grade 2**

44. ETEC effectively promotes equality of opportunity, participation and progression into learning. It lives up to its aims that all prospective learners should be offered a place if it can provide appropriate training and support. The company has been successful in widening participation among learners with specific support needs by effectively removing obstacles to their learning. Recent marketing materials have positively projected diversity and have widened participation among learners from minority ethnic groups. Minority ethnic group members represent 2.3 per cent of ETEC's learners, above their representation in the population in the Sunderland area of 1.9 per cent. Twenty per cent of ETEC's learners have a disability, compared with 10.4 per cent of the population in the local area. ETEC has established numerous partnerships and projects which have been very effective in widening participation for the most disadvantaged young people in the area. A 'Building People' project has been established with South Tyneside and City of Sunderland local councils. Some 54 disaffected young people started this programme in 2004-05 and 35 of them have progressed into employment or further construction training. An effective partnership with Sunderland Housing Group and six local schools has provided on-site building craft training and vocational qualifications for 36 key stage 4 pupils. ETEC is working with Back on the Map, which is part of Sunderland City Council's regeneration directorate, on a New Deal for Communities project to establish a call centre targeted at providing employment for minority ethnic group members, asylum seekers and those on incapacity benefit. Several learners with disabilities have progressed into employment through a project run by ETEC. Many of these learners have multiple barriers to employment and have received very good practical and personal support which has enabled them to gain employment. These barriers include physical and mobility difficulties, sensory impairment, epilepsy and mental health and emotional problems. ETEC is 'positive about disabled people' and holds the symbol awarded by Jobcentre Plus in recognition of its work. Over the past two years, ETEC has won two awards in the area of equality and diversity.



45. The company's analysis and use of data on equality of opportunity and diversity is good. Data is effectively collected and analysed and is presented in tabular and graphical formats. The data covers the recruitment of under-represented groups including members of minority ethnic groups, women by area of learning, and learners with disabilities. The data has supported management decisions. For example, ETEC has developed good links with Thornhill and Southmoor schools where there are higher proportions of pupils from ethnic minorities. The company is also planning a specific painting and decorating course for women, following on from a similar successful course in 2004. Data on equality of opportunity also covers learning and the progress that learners are making, for example showing better achievement by women than by men. Data also shows that the achievement of minority ethnic learners compares favourably with that of others, as does the achievement of learners with disabilities against that of able-bodied learners. ETEC's analysis of data on equality of opportunity has assisted in the setting of new targets which will contribute positively to the LSC's equality and diversity impact measures. These targets include significantly increasing recruitment of women and minority ethnic group members and improving the achievement of learners with disabilities and from minority ethnic groups. Productive links have also been established with several external agencies to promote ETEC's training to under-represented groups and assist in the achievement of equality and diversity targets. These external agencies include the Bangladeshi Centre, the Bridge Project which is a women's project and the Shaw Trust which works with disabled people. Data on the achievement rates of learners who are receiving additional support is not routinely collected or analysed.

46. ETEC has a comprehensive equality and diversity policy which is provided to all learners, staff and employers. It contains useful information on the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 and the Disability Discrimination Act 1995, including the 2003 amendment on employment equality. ETEC also has a policy on anti-harassment and has introduced a new strategy for equality and diversity.

47. Learners have a satisfactory understanding of equality of opportunity. Training at induction covers legislation, diversity and rights and responsibilities. Learners' understanding of equality and diversity is adequately developed during progress reviews through the use of effective scenarios.

48. Two of ETEC's three sites are fully accessible to people with restricted mobility difficulties and have disabled toilets. Ramps have been installed in the single-story workshops at Lombard Street. Currently one learner has restricted mobility.

49. Over the past year all staff have completed training covering equality and diversity, the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and dyslexia awareness. ETEC has also produced a booklet called 'Thinking about Equality'. Staff have read the booklet and have subsequently taken an assessment which confirms that they have a good understanding of equality and diversity.

50. ETEC has developed a compliments and praise procedure and incorporated it into the quality improvement handbook. Posters illustrating the procedure are displayed on

all noticeboards. The company has dealt appropriately with the small number of complaints that it has received.

### **Quality assurance**

### **Contributory grade 3**

51. ETEC has introduced particularly effective actions to bring about improvements. A quality improvement handbook is in place. The handbook has detailed procedures and flow charts for key learning processes, many of which were missing at the previous inspection, and also for organisation, finance and administration. There are 16 key learning processes which effectively cover all the important aspects of the learners' experience. To date nine audits of key learning processes have taken place, with each being followed by a report to the person accountable for the process. The reports include a detailed explanation of the audit findings, together with corrective actions and suggestions for improvements. A quality improvement plan has recently been introduced. This now draws together ETEC's post-inspection action plan and the most recent self-assessment report. Appropriate actions are identified with accountabilities, timescales, monitoring actions and dates of completion. Overall there has been an improvement in learners' retention rates and most learners are making satisfactory progress. Retention rates on apprenticeship programmes are improving. Of the 12 learners starting apprenticeships in 2004-05, six are still in learning, two have been retained and one has completed. The retention rate on NVQ programmes is improving. Of the 20 learners who started NVQs during 2004-05, 16 are still in learning. Achievement rates are also satisfactory. Of the 23 learners starting apprenticeships or advanced apprenticeships between 2001-02 and 2003-04, six have completed their frameworks and five are still in learning. On the E2E programme, 36 per cent of the 148 learners who started in 2003-04 have progressed to further training or employment. In 2004-05, some 174 learners started the E2E programme. Currently, 26 per cent of these learners have progressed to further education, training or employment and 63 are learning. The retention rate for participants on New Deal programmes for adults is satisfactory at 65 per cent, and some 49 per cent have completed their learning goals. The rate of progression to jobs for these participants in 2004-05 declined slightly but is still satisfactory at 20 per cent. On New Deal 18-24 programmes the retention rate has improved steadily to 69 per cent. The rates of completion and progression to employment are satisfactory. They have held steady over the same period and are currently 33 per cent and 36 per cent respectively.

52. Observations of teaching and learning have been carried out on all staff, with 60 per cent of the sessions observed being graded as good or better. Not all staff carrying out observations of teaching have been trained to carry out the task. Collection and use of feedback is satisfactory. Over the past year, two surveys have been carried out. A detailed report is produced which analyses the information and identifies actions. Learners' satisfaction is generally improving, with 74 per cent saying that their training is good or better. Employers' feedback is collected annually. The most recent survey showed that employers were positive about their relationship with ETEC. However, the frequency of visits was variable and some employers said visits by ETEC were infrequent.

53. The self-assessment process is satisfactory, and all directors and staff are effectively

involved. Learners' interviews are carried out and effectively contribute to the self-assessment process. The self-assessment report effectively identifies most of the strengths and weaknesses identified at the reinspection. The report is suitably critical and evaluative and the grades it gives are realistic.

54. Internal verification is satisfactory. The company has an appropriate sampling plan and all assessments carried out by new assessors are internally verified. Assessors are observed carrying out assessment by the lead internal verifier and are given adequate feedback. Assessment is satisfactorily standardised, with a cross-vocational group of assessors meeting to ensure the standardisation of assessment decisions.

55. Insufficient use is made of data to monitor each learner's progress. ETEC has developed a satisfactory range of reports which keep managers and staff informed of recruitment, retention and achievement rates. However, insufficient reports are available which enable managers and staff to monitor each learner's performance. Vocational tutors hold records within learners' portfolios, which identify the NVQ units that the learner is taking and those which they have completed to date. The key skills units that each learner is following and has completed to date, together with their progress on key skills tests and portfolios, are recorded by key skills tutors and shared with vocational tutors at progress reviews. However, no reports currently draw this information together along with other essential requirements of the apprenticeship frameworks which learners are taking. A new report which shows each learner's progress has recently been produced for some programmes. However, this report does not link to the company's central data systems. The information is extracted manually and presented in a tabular format. The reports are circulated to staff and managers but they cannot access the information easily or view it online. The report contains the relevant information and identifies good, satisfactory and slow progress for each learner by means of a colour-coded system. A few learners make slow progress. It is too early to judge the effect the new report might have on monitoring learners' progress.

## AREAS OF LEARNING

### Construction

Construction		3
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
<b>Construction crafts</b>		
- Apprenticeships for young people	10	3
- Other government-funded provision	6	3
- Employer training pilot	2	3

### **Construction crafts**

#### *Strengths*

- good delivery of key skills qualifications
- good use of project work
- very good support for learners

#### *Weaknesses*

- insufficient co-ordination between on- and off-the-job training

### **Achievement and standards**

56. The apprenticeship achievement rate has improved since the previous inspection and is now satisfactory. Seven additional frameworks, two at advanced level and five at apprenticeship level, have been completed in the past year. The achievement rate on NVQ programmes has also improved, with 18 NVQ learners achieving a level 2 NVQ qualification since the previous inspection and a further four learners achieving the qualification through the EQ8 programme. Retention rates have also improved. During 2004-05, 25 learners have started construction programmes and 18 of these remain in learning. Learners are now making satisfactory progress towards their qualifications. Most learners are developing good knowledge and relevant practical skills of the standard required by industry. Learners' attendance is good and is closely monitored by training staff.

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

57. The delivery of key skills qualifications is good. Learners now start key skills training early in their programme. Key skills tutors have developed a number of projects that are related to construction activities. For example, learners calculate quantities of materials and use scale rules to develop an understanding of measurement. There is good co-ordination between key skills staff and construction staff. Monthly meetings take place to discuss learners' progress. New session plans are also being developed to identify

where key skills evidence occurs within the construction training. All learners are encouraged to achieve key skills units, regardless of programme requirements. Some learners on apprenticeship programmes have achieved key skills units at a higher level than that required by their frameworks. Many learners also achieve key skills qualifications in the application of IT, which is not a mandatory part of the framework. Lunchtime key skills sessions have been introduced to encourage participation and aid progress.

58. Learners gain good and varied off-the-job experience from the building projects carried out. Since the previous inspection, ETEC has developed its own construction company. Learners have been involved in the refurbishment of local community buildings, improvements to the environment and small projects for private customers. This has enabled learners to develop good practical skills and has increased opportunities to provide evidence and assessment in the workplace. Advanced apprentices are now able to experience aspects of site supervision and act as mentors for less experienced learners. These projects have also helped to raise the profile of ETEC in the local community and industry and to improve the local environment for residents.

59. Tutors and learning support staff provide learners with very good formal and informal support. Within ETEC, a dedicated youth development team provides advice, guidance and personal support to learners. Each learner is assigned a dedicated youth worker over the period of their training. The youth workers provide effective support which has enabled some learners to overcome personal problems, family issues, homelessness, financial difficulties, and drugs, alcohol and substance misuse. Tutors work closely with parents and employers to help resolve some significant problems learners have in their working lives and in training. Learners interviewed gave many examples of how staff had helped to develop their confidence and self-esteem. In addition, learners are able to benefit from social activities such as citizenship sessions, artwork and music projects. Learners also receive good support in the development of their literacy, numeracy and language skills. This support is provided by specialist staff who deliver the learning within a construction context and make it relevant to the learners' training. The support has helped to improve rates of retention and achievement and to develop a very positive environment for training.

60. Since the previous inspection, ETEC has made many improvements to its training facilities. The construction trades centre now offers learners good off-the-job training facilities in bricklaying and painting and decorating. The working areas offer realistic simulations of workplace activities which allow learners to develop relevant industrial skills. However, in wood occupations there are insufficient areas to simulate construction site activities. The training area for wood occupations is currently being upgraded to provide a suitable training environment. Tools and equipment have recently been renewed and are of a suitable trade quality. Learners have an adequate range of workplace opportunities. Employers are mainly sole traders to medium-sized contractors that carry out domestic and industrial work in the private and public sectors. Employers are responsive to learners' needs and value the contribution they make. The training provided is to industry standards. All training sessions observed during the inspection were satisfactory or better.

61. Progress reviews have been improved since the previous inspection and are now satisfactory. ETEC has developed and implemented a new procedure for progress reviews, and has introduced a new format for review documents. The new documents contain useful prompts for the reviewer. These include checks that ensure the previous review is revisited, the individual learning plan is updated and the learner's portfolio is brought to the review. Realistic and measurable targets are set during the review. The review process is now effectively used to appraise and develop the learners' understanding of issues relating to health and safety and equality of opportunity.

62. Assessment practices are thorough. They include assessment planning and the briefing of learners to confirm their understanding. Learners are questioned well to measure their understanding and they receive clear feedback from assessors on the outcome of the assessment. This is then followed by detailed completion of the relevant NVQ documents. Learners' portfolios are satisfactory and contain suitable standards of work with an adequate range of evidence.

63. Internal verification is satisfactory and meets the requirements of the awarding body. New documents have been introduced and a lead verifier has responsibility for managing and auditing the verification process. External verification reports recognise the improvements that have been made and contain few required further actions.

64. Induction is satisfactory and lasts for a period of one week at ETEC's training centre, where learners are provided with useful and well-produced induction materials. Initial assessment is satisfactory. Where appropriate, details of support needs are identified and additional learning support is planned and delivered by specialist staff.

65. Significant improvements have been made to health and safety practices since the previous inspection. All construction companies have been risk-assessed and placed into appropriate risk categories by the health and safety co-ordinator and now receive thorough quarterly monitoring visits. An effective system is in place to record and report these visits and to follow up any identified actions. All learners are interviewed in their first week in the workplace. These interviews are used to check that site inductions have been carried out and to assess the learners' awareness of health and safety issues. All staff have completed, or are working towards an externally accredited 'managing safely' qualification. Additional learning sessions are now delivered to improve the learners' understanding and help them to prepare for the completion of the health and safety computer touch-screen test. Workshop rules have been developed which effectively cover the use of personal protective equipment, safe behaviour and good housekeeping.

### **Leadership and management**

66. ETEC has a number of useful partnerships with the local city council and Connexions in developing construction programmes to meet employers' and learners' needs. Promotion of equality of opportunity in construction is good. Issues related to equality of opportunity are dealt with well during the review process and learners have a good

understanding of equality and diversity. The self-assessment report prepared for the reinspection is sufficiently evaluative and critical. Inspectors agreed with most of the identified strengths and weaknesses. The post-inspection development plan is comprehensive and contains clear, measurable targets that provide for useful monitoring of progress.

67. Co-ordination between on- and off-the-job training is insufficiently developed. Training in the workplace is mostly unplanned and only reflects the programme of work being carried out by the employer. Employers are generally unaware of the training that learners receive in the construction centre and are not provided with schemes of work for off-the-job training by ETEC's staff. Employers are unable to plan workplace activities to allow learners to practise the skills learnt in the construction centre. Learners' progress is sometimes delayed as they are unable to develop the workplace skills that they need to achieve the NVQ. Most employers have insufficient understanding of the NVQ structure and of their role in the training and assessment process. Insufficient formal planning of off-the-job training takes place, and target-setting, linked to training activity in the workplace, is difficult to achieve.

## Business administration, management & professional

Business administration, management & professional		3
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
<b>Business administration</b> - Apprenticeships for young people	9	3

### **Business administration**

#### *Strengths*

- good development of workplace skills
- very good support for learners

#### *Weaknesses*

- insufficient monitoring of learners' progress
- weak links with employers

### **Achievement and standards**

68. Retention and achievement rates have improved since the previous inspection. Of the 22 learners on programmes at the time of the previous inspection, seven were New Deal participants. Five participants were studying IT and four of these have completed their learning plans. The remaining two New Deal participants were following business administration programmes. Both have completed their learning plans and have gained employment. Of the five apprentices at the previous inspection, four were in business administration and one was in IT. Of these five, three have completed their apprenticeship framework and one is still in learning. Ninety-one per cent of the business administration learners following a level 2 NVQ training programme at the previous inspection achieved within their expected end date. Retention is satisfactory. In 2004-05, two business administration apprentices started their training and one left without completing their qualification. One more apprentice started in 2005-06 and is still in learning. Two apprentices in IT joined the programme in 2004-05 with a further three joining in 2005-06. Four of these apprentices are still in learning. Learners who are still in learning are making satisfactory progress, and are developing relevant skills and knowledge.

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

69. Learners develop good workplace skills. They understand their role within their respective companies and develop the skills and knowledge required effectively to carry out their jobs. They make good use of IT and carry out a wide range of business activities using modern office equipment and technology. Learners effectively carry out tasks in reception, filing, typing, support, working with customers and event



management. They are often given greater responsibility by their employers and are able to use their initiative, very often resolving problems for themselves. Learners develop confidence and self-esteem as they do their job, and their ability to work independently makes a significant contribution to the businesses in which they work. Some employed learners have been promoted on completion of their training programme. The employers' involvement in training is good. They take great care to match the needs of learners to the job role. Employers have a good understanding of what is required to complete an NVQ.

70. Learners receive very good support. Assessors carry out regular progress reviews making contact with learners every two weeks. They have very good relationships with their learners, creating a very positive atmosphere in learning sessions and when assessors visit learners in the workplace. Tutors are extremely supportive, approachable and friendly. Learners feel comfortable asking for help and advice about their on-programme or personal issues. Learners have great respect for their assessors, and assessors show a genuine interest in the progress and welfare of their learners. Each learner is also supported by a dedicated youth worker over the period of their training. The youth workers provide effective support which has enabled some learners to overcome personal difficulties. For example, financial help was provided for some learners to enable them to purchase suitable business wear. One learner received practical assistance in finding suitable accommodation and various household articles necessary to support an unexpected independent living situation. Another learner received assistance with transport to and from the off-the-job training sessions. Support for learners' literacy, numeracy and language skills is also good. Learners requiring additional learning support attend effective support workshops. The high level of support provided by tutors motivates learners to continue with their programme and enables them to make good progress and achieve their qualifications.

71. Training in business administration and IT is satisfactory. Tutors are adequately prepared and organised. Aims and objectives are set for each learning session and learners understand what is expected of them. Session plans are followed appropriately and the pace of sessions is appropriate to the skills level of learners. In the better sessions, tutors use a wide range of training strategies to engage learners in a variety of practical activities. These sessions successfully motivate and challenge learners to extend their range of skills. Learners work at their own pace and tutors are very effective in providing individual support. Learners see the relevance of their off-the-job training to their work placement and future employment. The assessment process is effective and meets the needs of the learners.

72. ETEC provides satisfactory ICT training to support the development of practical skills for business administration and IT apprenticeships. This includes software applications such as word-processing, spreadsheets and databases. Specific ICT training is provided to support learners' needs in their work placement. One learner needed to develop electronic presentation skills as part of his job role. The assessor identified this and planned appropriate sessions as part of the off-the-job training programme. Learners also develop useful skills in conducting research using the internet and aspects of file management.

73. Resources are satisfactory. The training rooms are well lit, clean and professionally presented. The ICT suite has 23 computer workstations with an appropriate number of printers. There is a range of textbooks, videos and learning activity packs to support business administration and ICT programmes during off-the-job training sessions. However, learners are not aware of the extent of the resources and are not encouraged to borrow them to support independent learning activities.

74. Initial guidance and advice for learners is satisfactory. Induction is satisfactory and covers an introduction to ETEC, the programmes of study, health and safety, and equality and diversity. Initial and diagnostic assessment is satisfactory. The key skills tutor and assessors work together to ensure that key skills activities are relevant and delivered in a vocational context. Project work is developed to engage learners in activities which develop key skills and technical competence and are relevant to their work placement.

75. There is insufficient monitoring of learners' progress. Assessors do not sufficiently follow learners' ongoing progress between set targets. There is no formal record to identify when short-term targets are met and the outcomes achieved. Interim targets and dates are not recorded by assessors or learners for monitoring purposes. Assessors do not hold a central record showing the progress of all learners towards their overall and ongoing programme targets. Learners do not have a specific record showing the total qualification framework and their progress within each aspect of this. Some learners do not have a clear understanding about how much of their qualification they have achieved to date and how much they have left to complete.

### **Leadership and management**

76. The management of business administration and IT programmes has improved since the previous inspection. Communication between staff is good. There are regular formal meetings where curriculum and organisational issues are discussed and minutes are recorded. Internal verification procedures are satisfactory.

77. Links with employers are weak and insufficiently developed. ETEC has insufficient strategy for recruiting employers to engage with training, the employment of apprentices and the provision of work placements. The number of learners in business administration and IT is low and declining. The business development manager has a small central database of local companies. However, insufficient detail is available on the nature of business, locality and range of opportunities that ETEC could offer to support a learner in a work placement. Vocational tutors and other training staff have additional lists of local employers, constructed from personal contacts, prior placements and local knowledge. However, the contact lists and associated activities are not co-ordinated centrally and do not contain specific information that would be useful for learners' work placements. The ability of assessors to secure appropriate organisations that could provide suitable work placements for apprentices is inhibited. One learner recently waited eight weeks to be placed with an employer so he could begin his IT apprenticeship.