

INSPECTION REPORT

E.Quality Training Limited

30 June 2005



ADULT LEARNING
INSPECTORATE

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

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

Pre-inspection analysis

The resources allocated to a cycle 2 inspection are primarily determined by the findings from the previous inspection. Account is also taken of information about achievement and retention obtained from the funding body, and any significant changes in the size or scope of the provision.

Where a provider has received good grades in cycle 1, the cycle 2 inspection is relatively light. If the provider offers a number of areas of learning, a restricted sample is inspected.

Where a provider has received satisfactory grades in cycle 1, the cycle 2 inspection is less intensive and it is possible that not all areas of learning are included.

Where there are significant unsatisfactory grades from cycle 1, the intensity of the cycle 2 inspection is broadly the same as cycle 1, and all significant areas of learning are inspected.

Providers that have not previously been inspected will receive a full inspection.

Overall effectiveness

The grades given for areas of learning and leadership and management will be used to arrive at a judgement about the overall effectiveness of the provider.

An **outstanding** provider should typically have leadership and management and at least half of the areas of learning judged to be a grade 1. All area of learning grades will be graded 1 or 2.

A **good** provider should have leadership and management and at least half of the area of learning grades judged to be a grade 2 or better. A good training provider should not have any grade 4s, and few grade 3s in the areas of learning.

A **satisfactory** provider should have adequate or better grades in leadership and management and in at least two thirds of the area of learning grades. An adequate provider might have a range of grades across areas of learning, some of which might be graded 4.

Provision will normally be deemed to be **inadequate** where more than one third of the area of learning grades and/or leadership and management are judged to be inadequate.

The final decision as to whether the provision is inadequate rests with the Chief Inspector of Adult Learning.

Grading

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

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

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E.Quality Training Limited

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INSPECTION REPORT

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROVIDER

1. E.Quality Training Limited (E.Quality) is a private training provider based in Newcastle-under-Lyme in North Staffordshire. It was originally founded in 1999 as the Family Learning Group, to offer life skills programmes. That company no longer exists and E.Quality is essentially a new company. It offers Entry to Employment (E2E) programmes for 62 young people aged 16-19. E.Quality has a clear mission to recruit and support learners who may have been disadvantaged in the past. The company operates in three centres, two of which are in Hanley and one is in Newcastle-under-Lyme.
2. E.Quality has two directors, five full-time tutors, three part-time tutors and an office manager. The two directors are responsible for all aspects of the management of E.Quality under the two areas of quality and curriculum, and business and finance.
3. E.Quality receives its funding from Staffordshire Learning and Skills Council (LSC). In June 2005, the unemployment rate for Newcastle-under-Lyme was 1.4 per cent, compared with 2.3 per cent for England. In Staffordshire, the unemployment rate for young people was 31.4 per cent, just over 2 per cent above the national average, and 3 per cent higher than the same period in 2004. The main areas of employment are the service industries, distribution, hotels and restaurants and production and construction industries. According to the 2001 census, the proportion of people from minority ethnic groups in Staffordshire is 2 per cent, compared with 9.1 per cent for England. In 2004, the proportion of young people who achieved five or more general certificates of education (GCSE) at grade A to C was 51 per cent, compared with 53.7 per cent for England.

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS

Grade 4

4. **The overall effectiveness of the provision is inadequate.** Leadership and management, quality improvement arrangements and the quality of training in foundation programmes are inadequate. Equality of opportunity is satisfactory.
5. **The inspection team had some confidence in the reliability of the self-assessment process.** Staff involvement in the self-assessment process is satisfactory. The company's self-assessment report is detailed and informative. Aspects of the report are descriptive but evaluative judgements were reached in relation to some strengths. Inspectors did not agree with some of the strengths identified and few weaknesses were identified. Links between the self-assessment text, the strengths and weaknesses, and the action plan are not clear. Staff views were sought, but the company did not use feedback from other stakeholders. The company updated the self-assessment report for the inspection, but did not update the action plan to reflect the current position.
6. **The provider has demonstrated that it has sufficient capacity to make improvements.** The company's involvement in a number of quality initiatives, supported by external agencies, has led to some improvement in E.Quality's quality assurance arrangements. It has a range of activities intended to improve the quality of provision. The annual process

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of observation of teaching and learning provides tutors with detailed, constructive, written and verbal feedback about their performance. Learners' representatives have been introduced recently to provide learners' feedback, but it is too soon to judge their effectiveness. The company changed the arrangements for meetings to ensure that all staff could attend each week. Occasional staff development days about key topics, such as self-assessment, accreditation or company direction, keep staff up to date. Meeting records have improved significantly since last year. The company has improved many resources and recognises the need for an increased management resource. E.Quality monitors its action plans for improvement but this is not sufficiently frequent to drive improvement at a good pace.

KEY CHALLENGES FOR E.QUALITY TRAINING LIMITED:

- improve the management of training
- use data more effectively to plan provision and set targets
- establish a 'fit for purpose' quality improvement framework
- reinforce equality of opportunity to learners consistently
- continue to support and develop staff
- engage disaffected learners in challenging learning activities

GRADES

grade 1 = outstanding, grade 2 = good, grade 3 = satisfactory, grade 4 = inadequate

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

Foundation programmes			4
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade	
<i>Employability/employment training</i>			4
Entry to Employment	62		4

ABOUT THE INSPECTION

7. All aspects of E.Quality were inspected. Two inspectors made one three-day visit. They were supported by a specialist childcare inspector for one day.

Number of inspectors	3
Number of inspection days	7
Number of learners interviewed	37
Number of staff interviewed	9
Number of employers interviewed	2
Number of subcontractors interviewed	1
Number of locations/sites/learning centres visited	4
Number of partners/external agencies interviewed	3
Number of visits	1

KEY FINDINGS

Achievements and standards

8. **E.Quality is particularly effective in engaging disaffected young people in learning.** Significant increases in recruitment have taken place in the past four years. Learners are well motivated and gain in confidence. Some face challenging problems, such as homelessness or young parenthood, and some have not attended school since year seven. Their previous achievement is very poor.

9. Retention rates, the achievement of positive outcomes, and the standard of work are satisfactory. All learners who stay in learning achieve their personal objectives. So far, no learners have achieved external qualifications in literacy and numeracy.

10. **Learners' progress into jobs and further education is poor.** Many childcare learners are not sufficiently ready for employment. Attendance is poor. The number of learners progressing to other training provision is unsatisfactory. Only 8 per cent of the learners from the current year have progressed to further education or an apprenticeship.

The quality of provision

Grades given to learning sessions

	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Total
Foundation programmes	0	3	5	2	10
Total	0	3	5	2	10

11. **Learners benefit from good pastoral support.** Helpful tutors provide good support, to help learners find accommodation or by providing free on-site childcare facilities. The company has good links with a wide range of agencies that deal effectively with the learners' problems.

12. The best sessions are well planned and paced, and tutors engage the learners effectively through a variety of teaching methods. However, the slow pace and insufficient challenge restricts many sessions. Tutors rely too heavily on worksheets. There are

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insufficient checks on learning. In unsatisfactory sessions, the emphasis is on the completion of the tasks rather than the development of skills.

13. Tutors are appropriately qualified and experienced. Learning resources for various elements of the programme, including handouts and commercially produced resources, are satisfactory.

14. Initial assessment of literacy and numeracy skills is satisfactory. The company has made some attempts to introduce a learning style questionnaire, but it does not use this information to plan learning.

15. The range of provision is satisfactory overall. The programme is offered at three venues to enable learners to access the services easily. The times of classes are suitable for most learners. An appropriate range of accreditation for customer services at level 1 is available, but not for childcare. The company has been successful in attracting more young men into care programmes and outdoor pursuits, such as coaching and football.

16. **The range and the number of work placements and vocational tasters are inadequate.** The programme is not flexible enough for those learners who wish to spend more time on literacy and numeracy.

17. **Progress reviews and target-setting are weak.** Reviews do not give an overall assessment of the learners' progress on the programme. Tutors do not set short-term targets for achievement of personal objectives or qualifications. Many learners make slow progress. The frequency of review times is inflexible. However, recent progress reviews indicate better target-setting.

Leadership and management

18. **E.Quality has good links with partners and external agencies. The company has a good reputation for working with hard-to-help young people.** A wide range of agencies values the way that the company perseveres where other training providers have given up. The company has well-established involvement with a wide range of strategic partnerships that promote social inclusion.

19. **Staff review and continuous professional development are good.** A detailed and clearly written guidance document ensures that staff have a good understanding of the process. All staff, from the directors to the tutors, are involved in a wide range of staff development that meets the needs of the learner group. However, performance management between formal reviews is largely informal.

20. Communications are satisfactory. The company changed its arrangements for meetings to ensure that all staff could attend each week. Meeting records have improved significantly since last year. However, although action points are noted in the text of the minutes, the company does not always record the resulted actions.

21. Strategic planning is satisfactory. The company's strategic plan builds on a clear mission and value base. Staff are aware of the company's strategic direction and understand the links between their continuous professional development and the direction of the company.

22. E.Quality has an easily readable equality of opportunity policy that it has redrafted recently in the light of changes in legislation. This is only given to new learners. The policy for working with children and young people is very detailed and sets out all the requirements of working with vulnerable young people. Learners understand how to complain. The company resolves complaints effectively and sensitively. Access for wheelchair users is excellent in one centre, and at another it is satisfactory. In one of the centres, access is poor.

23. **The company does not reinforce equality of opportunity to learners sufficiently.** Some tutors include topics on equality of opportunity in learning sessions and the learners know what to do in cases of discrimination, but they do not fully understand what constitutes harassment, bullying and discrimination. Equality of opportunity issues are not fully discussed at reviews.

24. **The company's management of training is weak.** The links between the three strands of the E2E programme are not consistently well understood. The strategy for additional learning support is incomplete. Curriculum development, planning and review are insufficiently systematic. There is an over-reliance on informal approaches. The contractual arrangements with the two subcontractors that provide enrichment activities are not clear.

25. **E.Quality uses management information for planning and target-setting insufficiently.** While it collects and analyses a range of data regularly, it uses this mostly for LSC contract compliance and not for planning or target-setting. There is insufficient use of data in the self-assessment report to support some of the judgements. Managers do not make effective use of data to target provision or to make judgements about the relative achievement of different groups of learners.

26. **Quality improvement at the company is ineffective.** E.Quality's involvement in a number of quality assurance initiatives, supported by external agencies, has led to some improvement in its quality assurance arrangements. It has a range of activities that are intended to improve the quality of provision. However, aspects of these are incomplete and this limits their effectiveness. E.Quality has a quality assurance flow chart, and a range of policies about different aspects of the learning process, but there is no quality assurance policy or supporting procedures to ensure consistency. The collection and use of feedback is weak. There is no overall system, annual plan or cycle of quality assurance and internal audit that ensure systematic continuous improvement.

Leadership and management

Strengths

- good links with partners and external agencies
- good staff review and continuous professional development

Weaknesses

- weak management of training
- insufficient use of management information for planning and target-setting.
- insufficient reinforcement of equality of opportunity

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- ineffective quality improvement

Foundation programmes

Employability/employment training

Grade 4

Strengths

- good engagement of disaffected learners into learning
- good pastoral support

Weaknesses

- poor progress into jobs and further training
- insufficient challenge in many teaching sessions.
- weak target-setting in learners' progress reviews

WHAT LEARNERS LIKE ABOUT E.QUALITY TRAINING LIMITED:

- learning is structured to what learners need - help to learn at your own pace
- the flexibility to try new things and return
- crèche facilities and the childcare course
- the friendly environment and making new friends
- good support from approachable tutors
- small groups

WHAT LEARNERS THINK E.QUALITY TRAINING LIMITED COULD IMPROVE:

- the number of classes in English and mathematics - there could be more
- 'fun teaching that is related to what we use in everyday life, rather than loads of worksheets'
- the amount of talking by tutors - it could be less
- 'sometimes it's too much like school'
- 'somewhere to sit outside'
- 'the information technology (IT) room at one centre gets too hot and stuffy'

DETAILED INSPECTION FINDINGS

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Grade 4

Strengths

- good links with partners and external agencies
- good staff review and continuous professional development

Weaknesses

- weak management of training
- insufficient use of management information for planning and target-setting.
- insufficient reinforcement of equality of opportunity
- ineffective quality improvement

27. E.Quality has good links with partners and external agencies. The company has a good reputation for working with hard-to-help young people. A wide range of agencies that work with these young people value the way that the company perseveres where other training providers have given up. Good links with external agencies enable the provision of specialist advice and support, for example health promotion, college in the community, and druglink. The Sure start programme provides effective specialist support for young parents. E.Quality has well-established involvement with a wide range of strategic partnerships that promote social inclusion, such as pre-E2E provision, the 14-19 strategy group, and the E2E steering group.

28. Staff review and continuous professional development are good. A detailed and clearly written guidance document ensures that staff have a good understanding of the process. Staff are well prepared for their review meeting and understand their roles and responsibilities and that of the reviewer. All staff, from the directors to the tutors, are involved in a wide range of staff development that meets the needs of the learner group. All tutors are expected to obtain a teaching qualification if they do not already have one, and other tutors are studying for a range of specialist qualifications, such as, level 4 qualifications in literacy and numeracy, or qualifications in the diagnosis and support for learners with dyslexia. The company has mentoring and coaching arrangements for one of the directors. A local Centre of Vocational Excellence college is supporting this director's development to improve employer engagement. Induction arrangements for new staff are satisfactory. The timing of the review is shortly after the observation of teaching and learning. The information from the observation contributes to the review. However, these links are not explicit, and performance management in between formal reviews is largely informal.

29. Communications are satisfactory. E.Quality changed its arrangements for meetings to ensure that all staff could attend each week. Regular weekly meetings are supplemented by occasional staff development days about key topics, such as self-assessment, accreditation or company direction. There is now a clear agenda and detailed minutes showing many examples of discussion about learners' progress, concerns and new developments. However, although action points are noted in the text of the minutes, the company does not always record the resultant actions.

30. Strategic planning is satisfactory. The company's strategic plan builds on the clear mission and value base that sets the needs of the learner centrally. It keeps staff aware of strategic direction through staff development days and they understand the links between their continuous professional development and the direction of the company.

31. The company has expanded its provision, the number of learners, centres and tutors. It has invested significantly in additional resources, but not those relating to management. Managers recognise that they are at the stage of needing increased management resource but this is not yet in place. Some aspects of management are satisfactory. For example, lesson plans and schemes of work are regularly monitored and are a good standard. Tutors evaluate their lessons satisfactorily.

32. The company's management of training is weak. The three strands of the E2E programme are run independently and the links are not consistently well understood. The company does not co-ordinate the curriculum sufficiently. It does not manage induction effectively. The strategy for additional learning support is an aspect of a generic learner entitlement document, but it is not sufficiently detailed to support effective implementation. There is some curriculum development in response to the needs and interest of learners, but curriculum planning and review processes are not systematic. There is no accreditation for care at level 1. There is an over-reliance on informal approaches. For example, tutors hold a curriculum meeting every two weeks, but do not keep records of this. The contractual arrangements with the two subcontractors that provide enrichment activities are not clear. The range of vocational tasters, enrichment activities and work experience is narrow. Records relating to learners are fragmented and do not give staff an overall view of the learners' progress.

33. E.Quality uses management information for planning and target-setting insufficiently. While it collects and analyses a range of data regularly it uses this mostly for LSC contract compliance and not for planning or target-setting. For example, the company collects a lot of data about learners' starting points, the range of their support needs, and their initial assessment results for literacy and numeracy. The company does not use the data to measure their progress or provide information about changing trends in their support needs. The company monitors attendance patterns closely and takes action when learners are absent, but there is no specific strategy to improve attendance and retention rates. E.Quality's strategic and development plans set challenging long-term targets for growth, but the company does not use data to set short-term targets or monitor progress towards them. There is insufficient use of data in the self-assessment report to support some of the judgements.

Equality of opportunity

Contributory grade 3

34. E.Quality has an easily readable equality of opportunity policy that it has redrafted recently in the light of changes in legislation. The language it uses is simple and relates to the learners' experience. The policy for working with children and young people is very detailed and sets out all the requirements of working with vulnerable young people and the action that the company will take in the event of any concerns. Learners are well protected. A variety of partnerships ensures good specialist support and advice for learners and many previously poor achievers are now gaining in skills and confidence. However, the equality of opportunity policy is only given to new learners and long-standing learners have not received a copy.

35. Learners understand how to complain. The managers resolve complaints effectively. They deal with discriminatory remarks sensitively, and very tactfully remind the learners of their responsibilities.

36. Accommodation is satisfactory overall. In one of the three centres, access for wheelchair users is excellent and at another it is satisfactory. However, in one of the centres, access is poor. The stairs are steep and narrow. Satisfactory arrangements are made for learners with a disability, at alternative venues. Learning resources for various elements of the programme, including handouts and commercially produced resources, are satisfactory for all learners.

37. Some tutors include topics on equality of opportunity in learning sessions. A wall display of learners' work shows good understanding of what to do in cases of sexual harassment and bullying. Learners have a good understanding of disability issues. In a good session on disability and customer services, learners carried out a survey of local stores for accessibility. They develop understanding about the business need to meet the needs of disabled customers and the needs of other members of the community, such as older people or parents with pushchairs. In an IT lesson, a number of examples of how the use of IT has improved communication for hearing-impaired people were discussed. Childcare learners explain how they avoid stereotyping in the selection of toys and games that they provide for children.

38. Managers collect and analyse detailed data about gender, learning and social needs, and ethnicity. However, they do not make effective use of data to target provision or to compare the relative achievement of different groups of learners. Provision of outdoor education has attracted young men into learning and some men have joined the childcare programme, but there is no promotion of different programmes to under-represented learner groups.

39. The company does not reinforce equality of opportunity to learners sufficiently. They know what to do in cases of discrimination, but do not fully understand what constitutes harassment, bullying and discrimination, including positive discrimination. For example, in one session the learners proposed that 30 per cent of all jobs should be given to minority ethnic groups. This was not corrected. Not all learners are offered classes where equality of opportunity issues are discussed. The company does not fully discuss or record equality of opportunity issues at reviews. Learners are asked about their experience, but many reviews simply record, 'feels that s/he is treated fairly'. The arrangements for the checking of equality of opportunity policies held by employers or the providers of enrichment activities are not clear.

Quality improvement

Contributory grade 4

40. The company's involvement in a number of quality assurance initiatives, supported by external agencies, has led to some improvement in E.Quality's quality assurance arrangements. It has a range of activities that are intended to improve the quality of provision. However, aspects of these are incomplete and this limits their effectiveness.

41. The annual process of observation of teaching and learning provides tutors with detailed, constructive, written and verbal feedback about their performance. Most staff are new and have only been observed once. The observations are not graded and the action

plans for development do not have sufficiently specific timescales. Performance management in between observations is largely informal.

42. Staff involvement in the self-assessment process is satisfactory. A full day of staff development provides a good forum for discussion and the identification of strengths and weaknesses. The self-assessment report is detailed and informative. Although aspects of the report are descriptive, accurate and evaluative judgements were reached in relation to some strengths. However, the inspectors did not agree with some of the strengths that the company identified, and fewer weaknesses were identified. Links between the self-assessment text, the identified strengths and weaknesses and the action plan are not clear. Judgements are not sufficiently supported by evidence. Although staff are involved in giving their views during the self-assessment process, the company does not use feedback from other stakeholders. The self-assessment report was updated for the inspection, but the action plan was not updated to reflect the current position. The annual review of the action plan is insufficiently frequent to drive progress forward. The grades given by the company were higher than the inspection grades.

43. Quality improvement at the company is ineffective. E.Quality has a quality assurance flow chart in place, and a range of policies about different aspects of the learning process, but there is no quality assurance policy or supporting procedures to ensure consistency across the three centres. There is no overall system that links the different aspects of quality assurance together. There is no annual plan or cycle of quality assurance and internal audit that ensures systematic continuous improvement.

44. E.Quality has sought feedback from employers and learners in the past, but systematic collection and analysis of learners' feedback has only been carried out very recently. The design of the questionnaire is very general and basic, and the responses are insufficiently detailed to support improvement. For example, the questionnaire does not include questions about the quality of teaching or learning support, and there are no open questions. The sample size or response rates are not clear. There are no sufficiently recent earlier surveys with which to make comparisons. Many learners do not respond well to written questionnaires. Informal feedback from learners and stakeholders is obtained but not recorded. Learners' representatives have been introduced recently to provide another way to gain feedback, but it is too soon to judge their effectiveness.

AREAS OF LEARNING

Foundation programmes

Grade 4

Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
<i>Employability/employment training</i> Entry to Employment	62	4 4

45. During the inspection, 62 learners aged between 16 and 18 attended various strands of the E2E programme. E.Quality delivers the programme from three training centres in Stoke-on-Trent. Learners are referred by their Connexions personal advisers and by other referral agencies, such as Sure Start, the youth offending team, Gingerbread and the social services.

46. One of the two directors is responsible for the overall delivery of the programme, supported by five full-time and three part-time tutors. The programme consists of English, mathematics, IT, employment skills, outdoor education, and practical skills development in childcare, including health and social care and customer care. Two subcontractors deliver short courses in team-building, outdoor education and first aid. Some learners attend work placements, either at the provider's site or at other childcare providers. Learners can gain external accreditation in literacy, numeracy, IT and customer care. Learners can join the programme at any time during the year and attend for 16 hours each week. Their progress is reviewed at six- and 22-week intervals. Seventy-five per cent of the learners are women. Ninety per cent of the learners are of white British origin. Forty per cent of the learners have additional learning needs. Many learners face a range of disadvantages associated with offending, homelessness or young parenthood.

Employability/employment training

Grade 4

Strengths

- good engagement of disaffected learners into learning
- good pastoral support

Weaknesses

- poor progress into jobs and further training
- insufficient challenge in many teaching sessions.
- weak target-setting in learners' progress reviews

Achievement and standards

47. E.Quality is particularly effective in engaging disaffected young people in learning. The number of learners recruited on the programme has increased significantly, with a 500 per cent increase in the past four years. There were 12 learners in 2001 and 62 in 2005. Learners are well motivated and gain in confidence. Many of the learners have negative experiences of learning and irregular school attendance patterns. Some of them have not attended school since year seven. Their previous achievement is very poor. Some also

face challenging problems, such as homelessness or young parenthood.

48. Retention rates and the achievement of positive outcomes are satisfactory at 56 per cent. The standard of work is satisfactory overall. All learners who stay in learning achieve their personal objectives. The development of computer skills is good. Learners fill in forms and word process their curriculum vitae correctly. They use internet skills effectively to search for jobs. Many have not used these skills before and are proud of their achievements. The development of literacy skills is satisfactory, but achievement and progress in numeracy skills is slow. Learners' understanding of the world of work is satisfactory but theoretical. Learners make satisfactory progress towards practical caring skills. In any week, two learners can spend up to five days in the providers' nursery to practise practical childcare skills under the guidance of well-qualified and experienced staff. Learners achieve a satisfactory standard of transferable customer care skills.

49. Learners' achievement of short qualifications such as first aid and outdoor pursuits is satisfactory. In the current year, 54 learners have achieved a qualification in emergency first aid. Learners have gained 67 outdoor pursuits certificates, in activities such as climbing, kayaking, snowboarding and orienteering. Some learners take more than one qualification and gain in-house certificates for short courses in food hygiene and team-building. So far, no learner has achieved external qualifications in literacy and numeracy.

50. Learners' progress into jobs and further education is poor. Achievement of jobs in the current year is 16 per cent. Many of the learners are not sufficiently ready to work in childcare. Attendance is poor. Forty per cent of the learners in the current year have left due to poor attendance. The number of learners progressing to other provision is unsatisfactory. Only 8 per cent of the learners from the current year have progressed to further education or an apprenticeship. In 2003-04, 36 per cent of the learners achieved a positive outcome, such as a job or further education and training.

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

LSC funded work-based learning																	
Entry to Employment	2004-05		2003-04														
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
Number of starts	107	100	80	100													
Progression ¹	11	10	29	36													
Achieved objectives ²	17	16	45	56													
Still in learning	55	51	7	9													

1. Measured in terms of learners' movement to further training, education or employment, during or after their training

2. These being the key objectives identified for each learner while on E2E

The quality of provision

51. Learners benefit from good pastoral support. Helpful tutors provide good support to help learners stay on the programme. Examples of support include successfully finding accommodation for learners, providing free on-site childcare facilities for learners, including those aged over 19, payment of taxi fares, help to resolve difficulties with welfare payments, and referrals to healthcare professionals. The provider has good links with a

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wide range of agencies that deal with the learners' problems effectively.

52. Tutors are appropriately qualified and experienced. Learning resources for various elements of the programme, including handouts and commercially produced resources, are satisfactory for all learners, including dyslexic learners. Computer resources are excellent in one centre, good in another and satisfactory in the main centre. Learning resources for the first-aid course are very good.

53. Of the 10 lessons observed, 30 per cent were good, 50 per cent were satisfactory and 20 per cent were unsatisfactory. The best sessions are well planned and paced. Tutors engage the learners effectively and use a variety of methods appropriately, such as demonstration, discussion, group and pair work. The tutors check learning regularly and learners receive clear and constructive feedback about how to improve.

54. A slow pace and insufficient challenge restricts many sessions. Tutors use a narrow range of teaching methods and rely too heavily on worksheets. Some handouts used in classes are poorly photocopied. There are not enough checks on learning. For instance, some tutors do not allow sufficient time for the learners to respond to questions and answered the questions themselves. Tutors do not always reinforce learning effectively. Some do not relate the learning to real-life experiences. In unsatisfactory sessions, the emphasis is on task completion rather than skills development. Learners' attainment in these sessions is poor. Some tutors do not give feedback to the learners on their written work. Learners do not have a clear idea of how they could improve their performance.

55. The initial assessment of literacy and numeracy skills is satisfactory. The company has made some attempts to introduce a learning style questionnaire, but it has not used this information to plan learning.

56. The range of provision is satisfactory overall. The programme is run at three venues across the city to enable learners to access the services easily. The times of classes are suitable for most, but not all, learners. Some learners are unable to attend punctually in the mornings, and they are allowed the flexibility of attending at alternative times to meet other obligations. Approval to offer literacy and numeracy and key skills qualifications has been obtained recently. An appropriate range of accreditation for level 1 course is offered in customer services, but the level 1 course in childcare is not validated externally. The company offers some vocational tasters in painting and decoration. It has been successful in attracting more young men into care programmes and outdoor pursuits, such as coaching and football. The range and the number of work-experience placements and vocational tasters are inadequate. Learners can only attend some childcare work placements for a very short time. Some of the arrangements to offer work experience are poorly planned. E.Quality recognises this in its most recent self-assessment report.

57. The programme is not flexible enough for those learners who wish to spend more time on literacy and numeracy skills. Literacy and numeracy support for learners on childcare and social care courses is unsatisfactory. Some tutors make good attempts to provide support to learners but it is inadequate. The company plans to meet this need through the use of literacy and numeracy materials that are established into the curriculum.

58. Progress reviews and target-setting are weak. Reviews do not give an overall assessment of the learners' progress on the programme. For example, in one review, the

tutor focused on the progress made by the learner on attendance and punctuality, but not on the overall progress. Tutors do not gather information on learners' progress from other parts of the programme. The company monitors the learners' progress against each session and records the start and completion dates of each unit of qualifications, but tutors do not set short-term targets for the achievement of personal objectives or qualifications. Many learners make slow progress. In 2003-04, 75 out of the 80 learners continued beyond their expected end date. In the current year, nearly half of all learners are beyond their expected end date. Review times are inflexible. All reviews are completed on a four-weekly cycle, with no adjustment for those learners who may need a different frequency of review. The company has not reviewed the progress of the most long-standing learners. There have been some improvements, and recent progress reviews are better. These have time-bound, realistic, specific and measurable targets.

Leadership and management

59. Internal verification processes and systems are satisfactory. The company has recently set up qualifications and introduced internal verification. The internal verifier samples all of the folders and gives detailed feedback to the tutors and learners. There are clear records of the process. The first external verifiers' report is satisfactory.

60. Curriculum management is weak. The company does not co-ordinate the curriculum sufficiently and the three parts of the programmes run independently of each other. It does not manage induction effectively. Most learners do not know the objectives of the programme and how it all fits together to raise their achievement level and prospects of employment. The company's most recent self-assessment report identified the need for more external accreditation, better employer links and more work-placement opportunities. However, these have not progressed sufficiently. There is no external accreditation in care and the range of vocational tasters, enrichment activities and work experience has not expanded.

