

INSPECTION REPORT

Meat East Anglia Trades (Ipswich) Limited

21 July 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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INSPECTION REPORT

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROVIDER

1. Meat East Anglia Trades (Ipswich) Limited (MEAT) provides training for learners in the meat and poultry industry throughout the country. It provides apprenticeships, advanced apprenticeships and national vocational qualification (NVQ) training at level 2, 3 and 4. The company employs five full-time staff and six part-time contracted staff. It is owned and run by the managing director, who works full time. The company's offices are in Ipswich, where the managing director, general manager, two administrative staff, one trainee trainer/assessor and a media developer are based. There are five part-time tutors/assessors who work around the country, some of whom are contracted to work for two or three days each month. Last year, MEAT made the transition from regional to national provider.

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS

Grade 2

2. **The overall effectiveness of the provision is good.** MEAT's leadership and management are good, as are its arrangements for equality of opportunity. Quality improvement is satisfactory. In engineering, technology and manufacturing, the provision is good.

3. **The inspection team was broadly confident in the reliability of the self-assessment process.** The self-assessment process is inclusive and carried out regularly. The company makes good use of feedback from learners and employers. The most recent report was detailed, accurate and sufficiently self-critical.

4. **The provider has demonstrated that it is in a good position to make improvements.** The provider has improved the quality of the provision since the previous inspection. This has happened during a period of transition from a regional to a national provider. Actions to improve the provision are swift and effective.

KEY CHALLENGES FOR MEAT EAST ANGLIA TRADES (IPSWICH) LIMITED:

- maintain strengths identified by inspection
- continue to make an effective transition from regional to national provider
- improve the strategy to deliver literacy, numeracy and language support for learners
- develop greater learner involvement in, and understanding of, learning processes
- improve the use of information in an holistic approach to quality improvement

GRADES

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

Leadership and management		2
Contributory grades:		
Equality of opportunity		2
Quality improvement		3

Engineering, technology & manufacturing			2
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade	
Manufacturing		2	
Apprenticeships for young people	73	2	
NVQ training for young people	12	2	

ABOUT THE INSPECTION

5. The area of learning provided by MEAT was inspected and reported on. Inspectors visited learners across the country for two days in the week before the final inspection visit.

Number of inspectors	4
Number of inspection days	18
Number of learners interviewed	26
Number of staff interviewed	14
Number of employers interviewed	22
Number of locations/sites/learning centres visited	1
Number of partners/external agencies interviewed	3
Number of visits	2

KEY FINDINGS

Achievements and standards

6. **The development of learners' skills is good.** Learners work on a wide range of topics within their employment. They develop good skills in all of them. They also develop customer-handling skills and improve their level of confidence.

7. Retention is satisfactory and MEAT has successfully reduced the number of early leavers. Overall achievement is satisfactory, with high rates for NVQ achievements.

The quality of provision

8. **Resources at MEAT are good.** Learners have access to a wide range of well-produced and informative workbooks, DVDs, videos and photographic resources.

9. **The involvement of employers is particularly effective.** Employers take a very active part in the learning process, are fully involved at all stages and provide a range of activities for learners to enhance their experience. Employers are particularly knowledgeable about learners' progress.

10. **Support for learners is good.** Assessors' visits are frequent and effective. There is particularly good and regular telephone support. MEAT provides good support for learners experiencing a range of problems.

11. **Support for learners' literacy and numeracy needs is inadequate.** MEAT provides support for learners to help them complete their qualifications, but support to meet their general needs is neither structured nor effective.

Leadership and management

12. **Teamworking at MEAT is particularly effective.** Full-time staff work well together and arrangements to include part-time staff are good. This is particularly effective for staff who operate in regions away from East Anglia. This teamwork is evident in MEAT's prompt and effective response to problems.

13. **Staff development is good.** MEAT provides a wide range of opportunities for staff to develop, both to improve their job performance and to meet their personal and career aspirations. However, assessors' practices have not been updated to reflect most recent changes.

14. **MEAT's promotion of equality and diversity is good.** The company has worked effectively to ensure that it does not reflect the poor gender balance within the industry. The percentage of female learners is currently at 7 per cent and has frequently been above 10 per cent. MEAT effectively supports learners with disabilities to start and complete their qualifications. This work is also enhanced by MEAT's strong partnerships with other organisations.

Leadership and management

Strengths

- particularly effective teamworking and staff involvement in decision-making
- good support for the professional development of staff
- prompt and effective response to problems
- strong partnerships with external agencies
- good promotion of equality and diversity

Weaknesses

- weak strategy to meet the learners' skills for life needs
- insufficient use of information and data to promote quality improvement

Engineering, technology & manufacturing

Manufacturing

Grade 2

Strengths

- good development of learners' skills
- very good range of learning resources
- particularly effective involvement of employers
- good support for learners

Weaknesses

- insufficient involvement of learners in recording and monitoring progress
- ineffective identification and provision of literacy and numeracy support needs
- insufficient learner and employer awareness of key skills

WHAT LEARNERS LIKE ABOUT MEAT EAST ANGLIA TRADES (IPSWICH) LIMITED:

- learning while still earning, and gaining a qualification at work
- the approach to the workbooks - they have the freedom to complete them in their own time and the photographs help
- the frequent and good contact with the company - 'we have had some amazing telephone calls'
- the friendly and helpful assessors, who visit frequently
- the achievements - being able to develop their skills to a better level and prove that they are capable
- the course - 'it is brilliant'
- the residential elements - being able to meet and work with other learners 'in the same boat'
- the practical work

WHAT LEARNERS THINK MEAT EAST ANGLIA TRADES (IPSWICH) LIMITED COULD IMPROVE:

- the emphasis on written work - there could be less
- the workbooks - less repetition and better wording in some questions, better-quality pictures in a few
- the amount of training on a variety of techniques by MEAT's staff in the workplace
- the number of exchange visits with other butchers

DETAILED INSPECTION FINDINGS

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Grade 2

Strengths

- particularly effective teamworking and staff involvement in decision-making
- good support for the professional development of staff
- prompt and effective response to problems
- strong partnerships with external agencies
- good promotion of equality and diversity

Weaknesses

- weak strategy to meet the learners' skills for life needs
- insufficient use of information and data to promote quality improvement

15. Business planning at MEAT is sound. The business plan is clear and the company has made a realistic assessment of its growth potential and effectively resisted requests to increase the number of learners at too high a rate. The company has managed its transition from regional to national provider effectively.

16. Communications are good and there is a particularly effective approach to teamworking. Meetings are frequent and regular and, where possible, include the part-time staff. When they are not able to attend they receive frequent updates by e-mail and telephone. All decisions, including business planning, strategic planning, development of learning programmes and learners' progress are discussed and collective decisions reached. Contracted staff value the efforts made to include them in the decision-making processes, feel very much involved with the company and express a great deal of loyalty.

17. MEAT provides good support for the professional development of its staff. All staff receive a thorough annual professional review. The office manager carries out the managing director's review. The key focus of these reviews is to consider the career development of the member of staff, in order to provide training and access to courses that build their skills and competence. This career development is both to help them perform their job role more effectively and to meet their own personal career aspirations. For example, one of the tutors is about to start an access course at a local further education college, with a view to progressing to an environmental health degree programme at university. Many staff have developed comprehensive portfolios of qualifications and experience, and MEAT continually encourages them to further develop these. However, although all of the assessors have held assessors' awards for several years, they have yet to upgrade their working practices to the most recent standards.

18. MEAT responds very quickly and effectively to resolve problems, particularly those that affect the learners and their progress. The formal complaints procedure is rarely used due to the speed at which issues are highlighted and tackled. Employers and learners speak very positively about the ease with which they can access MEAT's staff and the very receptive approach to their concerns. For example, one learner was concerned about the range of experiences available with their employer and contacted MEAT's head office in

Ipswich. Within a week MEAT's staff visited the learner and found an alternative employer. MEAT arranged the change to the mutual benefit of all involved. In another situation, a learner expressed concerns about his relationship with his tutor and this was resolved amicably within a couple of days of the initial discussion. Similarly, when learners have raised issues about the learning materials, or about their understanding of some of the content, MEAT has promptly arranged and delivered additional tutorial sessions, both at the centre in Ipswich or with extra visits to those for whom travel to Ipswich is difficult.

19. MEAT has strong and productive partnerships with external agencies that enhance the learners' experience. It has a particularly effective relationship with the National Federation of Meat and Food Traders. After considering starting its own training scheme to deal with the decline in available provision for its members, the federation decided to work with MEAT and promote them in its trade magazine. This has led to MEAT changing from a local provider in East Anglia to providing training nationally, from Devon to the Northeast. MEAT has particularly good partnerships with employers that it develops effectively to the learners' advantage. The company incorporates employers' expertise effectively into the learners' experience and MEAT's staff are particularly responsive to employers' and learners' needs and use their experience to develop appropriate training programmes.

20. MEAT's management of resources is good. There are currently sufficient suitably experienced and qualified staff to deliver the programmes. Teaching resources and accommodation at the training centre are good. MEAT has developed informative and colourful teaching materials to support all learners, and these are particularly useful for those who live and work remotely from the training centre. The company's deployment of staff is also very effective, with all learners contacted regularly.

21. MEAT's strategy to meet the learners' skills for life needs is weak. Skills for life is the government's strategy on training in literacy, numeracy and the use of language. There is no clear policy for delivering support for literacy and numeracy, in particular for those learners at a distance from Ipswich. All learners receive an initial screening test, but there is little use of diagnostic testing. Learners do receive some support. However, this is mostly geared to helping them achieve their qualification. For those learners who can access the centre, MEAT arranges extra tutorial sessions. For those who cannot visit the centre, the company sends them worksheets and they receive some support from their tutor/assessor. However, they do not have specialist training. MEAT has in the past offered life skills training and one member of the administration staff is qualified. However, they are not providing specialist support.

Equality of opportunity

Contributory grade 2

22. The promotion of equality and diversity at MEAT is good. The company has a clear and detailed equality and diversity policy. Its policies are very definitely focused on the learners. For example, the disability statement focuses on how the company can assess and meet the learners' needs rather than being a bland statement of conformance to legislation. Other policy documents are also clear and cover a range of issues, such as grievance and appeals. MEAT regularly and effectively reviews documents and they refer to most recent legislation. MEAT has a clear complaints process, but there have been no formal complaints in recent years. The company deals with any issues that arise swiftly and effectively before they reach the level of a formal complaint. However, there is no record of issues dealt with.

23. MEAT has good links with a range of organisations relating to equality and diversity. It is an active member of the Business Link's black and minority ethnic working group. The industry has a very low percentage of women and MEAT has taken effective action to rectify this and it usually has a relatively high percentage of female learners. It makes good use of successful examples and the staff profile indicates a good gender balance. The proportion of female learners has been as high as 10 per cent and is currently 7 per cent. This work sets a high standard for the national federation to follow. MEAT has effectively enabled learners with disabilities to gain employment, and start and complete the programme.

24. The person with specific responsibility for equality of opportunity is well qualified and experienced and has received a range of relevant training, such as counselling. Staff receive relevant training and updating at the regular meetings. This includes contract staff who only work for small periods of time. MEAT makes good use of the Learning and Skills Council's equality and diversity initiative to inform learners. The workbook provided for learners is thorough and detailed. Learners' answers demonstrate clear understanding of equality and diversity issues.

25. MEAT makes some use of data to identify learners' profiles and meet its contractual requirements. It makes good use of national and local statistics to identify trends in representation. However, there is no analysis of performance by specific gender or minority ethnic groups. Monitoring of equality and diversity issues in the workplace is satisfactory. The company makes thorough checks when a new employer joins the programme. It uses reviews and telephone tutorials to check if there have been any specific incidents. Initial training for learners is good. However, subsequent monitoring and reinforcement is not sufficiently detailed. There is no section on the review for monitoring the learners' understanding of equality of opportunity and the company does not use reviews to reinforce learners' understanding. Most learners have a satisfactory understanding of the subject. However, there are a few whose knowledge is poor.

Quality improvement

Contributory grade 3

26. MEAT has a clear and comprehensive set of quality assurance policies and procedures that cover all the key phases of the training cycle. The procedures are well written in clear and simple language and are readily accessible to all staff and regularly audited. Self-assessment is an integral part of the quality improvement practices and takes place annually. The process involves all staff, including the remote assessors, some of whom are contracted to work for a few days each month. All of the staff have a clear understanding of the key issues and have contributed through the regular team meetings, or by e-mail if they are working remotely. All contributions are openly discussed and, where agreed, incorporated into the report.

27. MEAT makes particularly effective use of the views of learners and employers, which it gathers from feedback forms and interviews. The action and development plan produced from the report is very detailed and clearly identifies specific areas of responsibility and timescales for actions. In it, MEAT clearly identifies actions as high, medium or low risk by the use of an effective colour-coding system. The action plan is reviewed regularly at team meetings and the actions are monitored effectively. The self-assessment report has been compiled against the Common Inspection Framework and the judgements are realistic and in line with those of the inspection team. However, some weaknesses identified focused on procedural issues rather than those that would bring about overall quality improvement

of the learners' experience.

28. One member of staff and an external consultant carry out internal verification which meets the requirements of the awarding body. There is a clear sampling plan and the company is dealing appropriately with the action points identified by the external verifier. Internal verifiers sample all modes of assessment and provide appropriate feedback to the assessors to contribute to improvements in assessment practice. The process for checking documents is satisfactory. MEAT samples documents routinely and checks them for quality and completeness. Learners' files are organised well and contain a good range of information.

29. There is insufficient use of data and information to promote improvement in the learners' experience. The company collects data from a variety of sources and much is effectively represented in charts and graphs. However, it does not use this information systematically to bring about qualitative and quantitative improvements in the provision. The company does not routinely set quantitative targets against which it can measure improvements and it does not analyse information regularly to identify trends or the underlying causes for these trends. It sets controlled growth targets for recruitment but sets few targets for retention or achievement and there is little effective monitoring of trends over time. There is little overall analysis of the different experience between those learners who live locally, and can attend tutorial and teaching sessions at the training centre, and those who live a considerable distance from the centre and receive much of their training remotely, with the support of visiting tutors and employers.

AREAS OF LEARNING

Engineering, technology & manufacturing

Grade 2

Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Manufacturing		2
Apprenticeships for young people	73	2
NVQ training for young people	12	2

30. MEAT provides NVQ training at level 2, 3 and 4 for learners in the meat and poultry industry throughout the country. All of its learners are in full-time employment. Many of them have been employed in the industry for some time and are usually referred by their employers. MEAT assists some learners in the eastern region to find suitable employment. Learners attend off-the-job training at the company's offices in Ipswich, where there are resources for the practical and background knowledge aspects of training. Assessment of learners takes place both within their place of work and at the company's premises, in a pattern designed to meet employers' requirements. At the time of inspection there are 85 learners, of whom eight are advanced apprentices, 65 are apprentices and 12 are learners on NVQ programmes.

Manufacturing

Grade 2

Strengths

- good development of learners' skills
- very good range of learning resources
- particularly effective involvement of employers
- good support for learners

Weaknesses

- insufficient involvement of learners in recording and monitoring progress
- ineffective identification and provision of literacy and numeracy support needs
- insufficient learner and employer awareness of key skills

Achievement and standards

31. MEAT has successfully reduced the number of learners who leave the programmes early without a qualification. In the current year, 2004-05, 94 per cent of all learners are still in learning. For 2003-04, over 70 per cent of NVQ learners and apprentices have either achieved their qualifications or are still in learning. The achievement rate for learners on NVQ programmes is good. In 2002-03, 63 per cent of learners completed their programmes and 65 per cent of apprentices also completed their NVQ at level 2. The learners who started in 2003-04 have already completed most elements of their NVQs.

32. The achievement rate for apprenticeships is satisfactory, with 40 per cent of learners in 2001-02 and 2002-03 completing the full framework. The number of learners on advanced

apprenticeships is low but historical achievement is poor. The company recognises this and has restructured the programme for the learners starting in 2004-05. These learners are making good progress. However, it is too early to make any judgement of the effectiveness of these changes.

33. Learners develop a high level and wide range of practical skills, including the butchery of whole carcasses of meat, and the preparation of joints and small cuts. They also prepare sausages, pies, pasties and meat used for barbeques. During the induction period at the training centre, new learners work alongside more experienced learners, who mentor them and demonstrate the skills they will acquire during training. MEAT effectively encourages the learners to enter local and national competitions. This work further develops their skills. Learners have had good successes in these competitions. For example, one of them won a sausage-making prize in a regional competition. The learners' confidence improves with the development of their skills. Employers recognise their improved customer-handling skills. The company instils a good work ethic in the learners and all of them develop a good approach to learning. The wide range of optional units selected on programmes supports learners' development of skills, knowledge and understanding, linking well with their job role and the expectations of employers.

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

LSC funded work-based learning																	
Advanced apprenticeships	2004-05		2003-04		2002-03		2001-02										
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
Number of starts	7		4	100	4	100	4	100									
Retained*	0		0	0	2	50	0	0									
Successfully completed	0		0	0	1	25	0	0									
Still in learning	7		0	0	1	25	0	0									

*retained learners are those who have stayed in learning for at least the planned duration of their training programmes, or have successfully completed their programme within the time allowed

LSC funded work-based learning																	
Apprenticeships	2004-05		2003-04		2002-03		2001-02										
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
Number of starts	52		33	100	20	100	25	100									
Retained*	0		23	70	12	60	16	64									
Successfully completed	0		7	21	8	40	10	40									
Still in learning	49		16	48	0	0	0	0									

*retained learners are those who have stayed in learning for at least the planned duration of their training programmes, or have successfully completed their programme within the time allowed

LSC funded work-based learning																	
NVQ Training	2004-05		2003-04		2002-03		2001-02										
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
Number of starts	8		12	100	16	100	4	100									
Retained*	0		9	75	10	62	4	100									
Successfully completed	0		3	25	10	62	4	100									
Still in learning	7		5	42	0	0	0	0									

*retained learners are those who have stayed in learning for at least the planned duration of their training programmes, or have successfully completed their programme within the time allowed

The quality of provision

34. Learners have access to a wide range of good resources to support their programme. MEAT has developed workbooks for each mandatory and optional unit. These workbooks are good and contain a range of colour photographs to illustrate various aspects, such as joints and cuts of meat and good product displays. These workbooks contain the background knowledge questions that learners are required to answer. However, in some of the books, some questions are repetitive and some learners encountered difficulties in fully understanding them. Learning materials are also provided on DVD, video and in photographic form, all of which provide good graphic detail of processes used within the industry. The company makes good use of the assessors' own wide experiences and knowledge and that of the employers. The wide range of commodities and products in all of the workplaces also provides good learning resources.

35. The involvement of employers is very effective. All employers fully support training and most of them promote this effectively within their organisations. Many employers look for additional learning opportunities for their staff. Employers provide good on-the-job training and work closely with the staff from MEAT in developing this training to meet both their and the learners' needs. Employers are involved in planning learning and assessments, and MEAT works well with them to ensure that they are aware of learners' development and progress. Assessors' visits include effective discussions with employers, which all take a very keen interest in learners' development. In one organisation that does not normally deal with pork products, the employer purchased sides of pork for the learner to gain experience of butchery in order to achieve the qualification. One employer has supported the learners by having them attend a two-day butchery skills programme at a local college. Others arrange visits to slaughterhouses and cutting rooms to further improve the learners' knowledge and understanding. In most of the workplaces, the employers allow time during the working day for the learners to complete their workbooks and portfolios of evidence.

36. Support for learners is good. The frequency of workplace visits by the assessor has improved and is at six-week intervals. At the conclusion of these visits, learners are involved in identifying tasks they are required to complete before the next visit and understand these well. Employers are aware of these tasks and many are involved in deciding them with the learner and assessor. All learners receive a telephone tutorial from the company office at least once every two weeks. These are used to monitor their progress, review any difficulties that they may encounter and provide support as and when required. The member of staff responsible for these tutorials has a clear knowledge of the progress of each learner. Learners appreciate this level of contact. When the unit workbooks are completed, most are sent to the MEAT office, where they are marked and

quickly returned to the learner, usually within a week, with good comments on performance and how to improve if necessary. MEAT provides good support to learners who are experiencing a range of problems. In one situation, a learner was encountering difficulties at their workplace and MEAT supported this individual to change their employer and continue with their training programme.

37. MEAT's assessment of learners' progress is satisfactory. Most assessment is by observation and clearly meets the requirements of the awarding body. Learners are aware of the process of assessment and the planning of this during the review visits they have from the assessor. They receive sufficient time to practise skills to be assessed. Feedback after assessment is satisfactory. This is both verbal and written.

38. There is insufficient involvement of learners in recording and monitoring their progress during training. The record of progress within portfolios is completed by the assessor and not the learner. When asked by inspectors, many learners were unable to identify clearly what they had completed and what remained for successful achievement. Several were also unable to explain how their progress was being recorded. There is a lack of ownership of learning within this aspect of training.

39. The identification and provision of learning support needs are ineffective. All learners receive screening tests and MEAT records the results effectively. However, the company does not routinely use diagnostic testing to identify specific support needs. A few learners need additional literacy support but this has not been identified appropriately in their individual learning plans. There is no structured support to develop the learners' literacy skills. Assessors and employers provide help and support for learners to complete their workbooks and portfolios. One learner has improved his confidence and is now able to complete most of the workbooks himself. However, learners are not effectively supported to improve their general literacy and numeracy skills.

40. Learners and employers are insufficiently aware of key skills on apprenticeship programmes. Key skills are thoroughly and effectively integrated with the other elements of the programme. The assessor, not the learner, carries out cross-referencing of this evidence and does not always record it in the learners' portfolio. Learners are not developing the skills needed to identify evidence-gathering opportunities. Most learners are unable to identify key skills as part of their learning and many are unable to clearly identify all the components of an apprenticeship programme.

Leadership and management

41. MEAT holds regular team meetings with identified agendas. Minutes of meetings are well recorded, although actions from these meetings do not always clearly identify responsibility or timescale. Reviews of training are regular and effective. Continuous improvement is part of the company's culture. Staff appraisals are well managed and have development outcomes, but staff are unaware of any formal targets for retention or achievement. Internal verification is satisfactory, with planned verification of learners' portfolios and good recording of assessment practices, which also include the views of learners. There is limited understanding of equality of opportunity by a few learners and the reinforcement of these issues is limited. The company has developed further resources for learners to improve their understanding. All staff are involved in the self-assessment process and have a clear role in developing the report. The report was judgemental and identified most of the weaknesses that the inspectors found. Strengths were not overstated

MEAT EAST ANGLIA TRADES (IPSWICH) LIMITED

and the picture was an accurate reflection of the provision.