

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **Heart Of England Training Ltd**

**23 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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## Heart Of England Training Ltd

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## INSPECTION REPORT

### DESCRIPTION OF THE PROVIDER

1. Heart of England Training Ltd (HOET) is a private training provider. Established in 1996, the head office is in Rugby and the company has six training centres in Rugby, Coventry, Birmingham, and Leicester. In the 1980s the organisation, then known as Martanne Hair Designers, became a managing agent, providing hairdressing training in Warwickshire and Birmingham. Since then there has been expansion both geographically and with additional vocational areas. The company currently provides training for 626 work-based learners in business administration, information and communications technology (ICT), management, customer service, hairdressing, beauty therapy and entry to employment (E2E). The areas of hairdressing and beauty therapy are the largest with 422 learners in hairdressing and 96 learners in beauty therapy.

2. Strategic decisions are the shared responsibility of the chairman and the managing director. All operational management is delegated to the managing director. A team of five sector specific managers have subject area roles as well as additional responsibility for the generic areas of quality improvement, equal opportunities, marketing, health and safety, management information and staff training and development.

3. The programmes are delivered in different ways, depending on the subject area or the requirements of the learner and employer. In hairdressing, most learners attend off-the-job training for one day a week at the training centre. Some learners do all the training and assessment at work and have a visiting assessor. In beauty therapy, all learners attend at least three days a week. In customer service and business administration, attendance is required for the technical certificate. Learners in E2E are all in-house unless they have work-experience placements.

4. HOET is funded through Birmingham, Leicester, and Coventry and Warwickshire Learning and Skills Councils (LSCs). Coventry and Warwickshire LSC takes the lead role.

### OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS

**Grade 2**

5. **The overall effectiveness of the provision is good.** More specifically, training in business administration, management and professional, retailing, customer service and transportation, hairdressing and beauty therapy, and foundation programmes are all good. Leadership and management and quality improvement are also good. The arrangements for equality of opportunity are satisfactory.

6. **The inspection team was broadly confident in the reliability of the self-assessment process.** Self-assessment is well understood by staff and their involvement in the process is good. The self-assessment report which was produced in July 2004 was not a true reflection of the provision at the time of inspection. All grades given by inspectors, other than in hairdressing and equal opportunities, were higher than the grades in the self-assessment report.

**7. The provider has demonstrated that it is in a good position to make improvements.**

Since the previous inspection in June 2001 and subsequent reinspection in 2002, HOET has implemented and established a range of successful improvement strategies. Quality assurance is well managed and used effectively to identify weaknesses in the quality of the provision and to continuously improve the training. The quality of provision in all areas has improved since the previous inspection. Beauty therapy and E2E, which are new since the previous inspection, are good. Good practice is shared across the provider. Retention rates are improving. In hairdressing, which constitutes 67 per cent of the provision, there has been significant improvement in retention rates. There are effective monitoring systems, and prompt actions bring about improvements.

**KEY CHALLENGES FOR HEART OF ENGLAND TRAINING LTD:**

- continue to maintain the high rates of retention and achievement
- increase workplace assessment by observation in business administration and ICT
- improve the background knowledge teaching in hairdressing and beauty therapy
- ensure specialist support is available for learners with additional learning and social needs
- ensure learners on the E2E programme use an effective individual learning plan for literacy and numeracy
- implement a clear equal opportunities strategy that has full staff involvement
- improve the process for observation of teaching and learning
- continue to introduce the technical certificate as a choice to customer service learners early in the programme

**GRADES**

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

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

<b>Business administration, management &amp; professional</b>			<b>2</b>
<b>Contributory areas:</b>	<b>Number of learners</b>	<b>Contributory grade</b>	
<b><i>Business administration</i></b>			
Apprenticeships for young people	69	2	
<b><i>Management</i></b>			
Apprenticeships for young people	3	2	

<b>Retailing, customer service &amp; transportation</b>		<b>2</b>
<b>Contributory areas:</b>	<b>Number of learners</b>	<b>Contributory grade</b>
<b>Customer service</b> Apprenticeships for young people	16	<b>2</b> 2
<b>Hairdressing &amp; beauty therapy</b>		<b>2</b>
<b>Contributory areas:</b>	<b>Number of learners</b>	<b>Contributory grade</b>
<b>Hairdressing</b> Apprenticeships for young people	422	<b>2</b> 2
<b>Beauty therapy</b> Apprenticeships for young people	96	<b>2</b> 2
<b>Foundation programmes</b>		<b>2</b>
<b>Contributory areas:</b>	<b>Number of learners</b>	<b>Contributory grade</b>
<b>Employability/employment training</b> Entry to Employment	20	<b>2</b> 2

## ABOUT THE INSPECTION

8. Since the previous inspection in 2001, the company has taken over a private hairdressing provider in Leicester. The provision in hairdressing has increased from 246 to 422 learners. Beauty therapy and E2E are now offered.

9. All areas were reported on. Learners were interviewed in management, but as there were only three learners at the time of inspection this was not reported on separately. There were no learners in ICT.

Number of inspectors	8
Number of inspection days	32
Number of learners interviewed	81
Number of staff interviewed	48
Number of employers interviewed	27
Number of locations/sites/learning centres visited	41
Number of partners/external agencies interviewed	2
Number of visits	1

## KEY FINDINGS

### Achievements and standards

10. **Retention rates have improved significantly.** For example, in business administration 97 per cent of the learners who started in 2004-05 remain in learning. In hairdressing there is a significant improvement in retention rates across all programmes. On the hairdressing apprenticeship programme there has been a 27 per cent increase in retention since the previous inspection. On the national vocational qualification (NVQ) programme, retention rates have increased to 94 per cent this year from 46 per cent at the previous inspection. In beauty therapy, retention rates have been consistently good, with 91 per cent of learners still in learning.

11. Achievement in business administration and customer service is satisfactory. In hairdressing and beauty therapy, the achievement rates are good. Learners make good progress and achieve within their targeted dates.

12. **In E2E, progression is good** with a high proportion of learners moving to employment, apprenticeships or further education.

13. **Learners quickly develop good workplace skills in all occupational areas.** Learners in business administration and customer service make good progress in complex job roles and take on high levels of responsibility. Confidence increases rapidly and learners soon become an asset to their organisations.

14. **In hairdressing, a good supply of clients promotes good development of technical skills.** Some learners have attained advanced skills during the time they have been on the programme.

### The quality of provision

Grades given to learning sessions

	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Total
Business administration, management & professional	0	2	0	0	2
Foundation programmes	0	2	1	0	3
Hairdressing & beauty therapy	0	7	6	1	14
<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>19</b>

15. The table above only shows areas of learning in which two or more learning sessions have been observed and graded.

16. **In business administration and customer service, the employers are fully involved in the training.** Employers participate well in reviews in business administration. They are supportive and provide good resources and learning opportunities. Very effective links with employers on E2E ensure that learners are in suitable work placements. Employers are also involved in carrying out mock interviews with E2E learners and giving advice on gaining employment.

17. **Portfolios across all areas are well structured.** In hairdressing there is good,

comprehensive evidence and portfolios are imaginatively produced. Good use is made of digital cameras and computers to produce assignments.

**18. Learners are well supported.** In customer service, learners have frequent contact with their assessor, and can contact them out of working hours. An effective counselling service is available and it is well used.

**19. Off-the-job training in business administration has improved since the previous inspection.** Lesson plans have clear learning objectives and learners are involved in a good range of activities.

**20. In E2E, learners are engaged in a wide range of learning activities.** This includes working towards a qualification, being involved in outdoor pursuits and team-building exercises, and listening to guest speakers. Equality of opportunity is a regular feature of their training sessions.

**21. In beauty therapy, learners participate in a range of enrichment activities** which broaden their knowledge of the industry. Staff participate in these activities to keep themselves up to date with current techniques.

**22. Assessment practice is good in customer service.** Learners have a good understanding of their programme requirements.

**23.** Resources to support learning are satisfactory. They are good in hairdressing and beauty therapy at most centres. There is a good ratio of tutors to learners in beauty therapy, and high levels of individual support.

**24. In hairdressing, the teaching of background knowledge does not meet individual needs.** There is excessive use of dictation and copying from white boards and flipcharts. In beauty therapy some of the teaching is uninspiring and does not engage learners throughout the lesson. Some learners have difficulty keeping up with the pace of the lesson while taking down notes.

**25. In business administration there is insufficient assessment through observation** during the early part of the programme. Some learners have been training for some time and are yet to be observed.

**26. There is insufficient support for learners with additional needs in business administration and beauty therapy.** However, the initial assessment satisfactorily identifies where support is required. Tutors give effective additional time on an individual basis to support the achievement of the qualifications. However, there are insufficient qualified and experienced staff to ensure that learners' additional needs are met. A number of staff are now taking qualifications in this area.

**27. The implementation of the technical certificate is slow in customer service.** Learners have had their choices restricted and have completed additional NVQ units to complete the framework. Staff have insufficient knowledge of the technical certificate and are not confident in its delivery. This was identified in the self-assessment report.

**28. In E2E, learners do not have an individual learning plan.** There is insufficient detail

and formality in the planning of learning and the setting of measurable targets to monitor progress.

## Leadership and management

29. **Business planning is good**, with clear and measurable targets. The draft business plan is shared and agreed with staff before its implementation. The final draft is presented by the chairman at an annual staff presentation.

30. **Training is well managed**. Performance management is particularly strong and quality has improved, as have the rates of retention and achievement. Emphasis is placed on target-setting for staff, including company, funding, programme area and personal targets. Progress towards completion of targets is regularly monitored through regular individual meetings with the line manager. Data related to retention and achievement is well used by staff. Staff have a good understanding of current company performance and how they can contribute to further improvements.

31. **There are good working relationships with employers**. HOET meets the needs of employers through offering flexible programmes and increasing the frequency of visits when required. A successful, well-established working relationship with local schools has involved a significant number of 14-16 year olds taking vocational courses with HOET. Twenty-two per cent have successfully moved to mainstream provision.

32. **Employers participate well in the apprenticeship training programmes**. There is good involvement in reviews, and employers make special arrangements to enable learners to change job roles to enable them to meet the requirements of their qualifications.

33. **HOET responds well to barriers to learners' achievement**. Learners who have a disability are provided with transport to allow them to access training programmes. Learners with hearing or sight impairment are given specialist support. HOET offers a rare opportunity for learners to enter beauty therapy without entry qualifications. They are given high levels of support to ensure that they progress to higher-level qualifications or positions in the industry.

34. **HOET has well-established quality procedures** that have brought about significant improvements to the provision since the 2001 inspection. There has been a significant improvement in retention and achievement in all areas. Rigorous monitoring systems ensure that learners who are at risk of leaving early or not achieving, are given every opportunity to achieve through additional workplace visits and support.

35. Internal verification is satisfactory, and meets the awarding body requirements for planning and sampling. Feedback to assessors is strong and promptly actioned. The internal verification process is used effectively to monitor learners' progress against their individual action plans and targets.

36. **Self-assessment is inclusive**. The report identified a number of strengths which were also identified by inspectors. It was dated July 2004, and inspectors identified that some of the weaknesses had been dealt with. Most of the grades given by inspectors were higher

than those in the self-assessment report.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Strengths**

- good business planning process
- good management of training
- good employer links
- positive responses to overcome individual barriers to learning
- wide range of effective actions to improve retention and achievement rates

### **Weaknesses**

- slow development in the availability of specialist support for learners with additional needs
- insufficiently clear strategy for equality of opportunity

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

### *Strengths*

- significant improvement in retention rates for 2004-05
- good development of workplace skills
- good employer participation
- very effective action to improve the provision

### *Weaknesses*

- some insufficient use of work-based evidence
- insufficient specialist support for learners with additional needs

## **Retailing, customer service & transportation**

### ***Customer service***

***Grade 2***

### *Strengths*

- good attainment of customer service skills
- very effective assessment practice
- very good support arrangements
- good employer involvement in training programmes

### *Weaknesses*

- slow implementation of the technical certificate

## **Hairdressing & beauty therapy**

### ***Hairdressing***

**Grade 2**

#### *Strengths*

- good and improving retention rates
- good achievement rates for the frameworks and NVQs
- wide range of clients promotes good development of technical skills
- comprehensive evidence in portfolios to support the achievement of the NVQ and key skills
- well-managed flexible training

#### *Weaknesses*

- some unsatisfactory background knowledge training to meet individual needs

### ***Beauty therapy***

**Grade 2**

#### *Strengths*

- good retention rates
- rapid development of good workplace skills
- wide range of enrichment activities
- flexible programme promoting good progression
- good participation from under-represented groups

#### *Weaknesses*

- some uninspiring teaching for background knowledge
- insufficient specialist support for learners with additional learning and social needs

## **Foundation programmes**

### ***Employability/employment training***

**Grade 2**

#### *Strengths*

- good achievement rates and progression
- wide range of learning activities
- very effective employer links
- very effective employer links

#### *Weaknesses*

- no formal individual learning plans for literacy and numeracy

## **WHAT LEARNERS LIKE ABOUT HEART OF ENGLAND TRAINING LTD:**

- the staff - 'we are treated like adults, with respect'
- individual attention - 'we get lots of one to one'
- the sense of achievement - 'the scissor badges are the best thing about this course'
- the practical work - 'we have a wide range of clients to work on'

## **WHAT LEARNERS THINK HEART OF ENGLAND TRAINING LTD COULD IMPROVE:**

- the amount of written work - too much note taking
- more resources for beauty - 'lockers for our beauty kits, and water dispensers'
- the size of the computer desks - they are not big enough

## DETAILED INSPECTION FINDINGS

### LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Grade 2

#### Strengths

- good business planning process
- good management of training
- good employer links
- positive responses to overcome individual barriers to learning
- wide range of effective actions to improve retention and achievement rates

#### Weaknesses

- slow development in the availability of specialist support for learners with additional needs
- insufficiently clear strategy for equality of opportunity

37. The business planning processes are good. The chairman sets the strategic direction of the organisation jointly with the managing director. They work together to produce an annual business plan. The organisation sets the strategic direction through various feasibility studies throughout the year. The strategic direction of the organisation is communicated effectively to staff on an annual basis through a whole organisation meeting. The business plan is then devised through agreement with all staff. The business plan sets clear and measurable targets.

38. The management of training is good. The management of the performance of programmes is particularly effective and closely linked to quality improvement. All managers and staff have individual targets, and in the past these have been particularly successful in improving retention and achievement rates in all programme areas. Internal communication is good. An annual schedule of meetings helps to ensure that meetings take place on time and during a time when relevant performance data is available. The meetings offer a wide range of opportunities for staff to review their own performance on an individual basis with their manager, to review programme areas and to standardise activities between centres.

39. Links with external agencies and employers are good. The contact with schools and Connexions is frequent and HOET has a successful programme for 14-16 year olds where 22 per cent of school children have entered mainstream provision with HOET. Frequent focus groups are held with employers to identify their needs. Employers' views are sought and programmes are adjusted to meet their needs, for example through increasing the flexibility and frequency of visits.

40. The arrangements for staff development are satisfactory. All staff have an annual appraisal and monthly individual meetings with their manager to identify training needs. Staff attend a good variety of training events and many work towards nationally recognised qualifications.

41. The accommodation, availability of specialist equipment and learning resources are

satisfactory. Accommodation has continued to improve in terms of location, size and decoration. However, the ventilation in the beauty therapy classroom in Birmingham is poor. Additional resources have also been purchased to keep the training up to date and to support the offer of higher-level courses.

42. HOET has a well-established E2E programme, and a significant number of learners on level 1 NVQ programmes who have support needs for literacy, numeracy and social behaviour. HOET has a strategy to develop literacy, numeracy and English language support, which includes an action plan for staff development and a statement of intent. The policy was developed in August 2004, but there has been little progress in achieving the targets and actions identified. There are no qualified advanced practitioners to develop support programmes. There are plans to ensure that staff are qualified to deliver basic skills, but none of the staff have started this training. HOET has found it difficult to identify appropriate courses for staff in the area.

### **Equality of opportunity**

### **Contributory grade 3**

43. Staff and managers respond positively to learners' barriers to learning. Potential learners with disabilities are supported to ensure they can access the training programmes. For example, a wheelchair user was transported from Rugby to Coventry for training. Learners with additional learning needs or those who have impaired hearing receive individual tuition and a signer when necessary. HOET has provided an opportunity for young people who do not have good general certificate of secondary education grades, to enter a career in beauty therapy. All the learners in beauty therapy have additional learning needs and the support they are given enables them to progress well in all aspects of their programme. Complaints are dealt with effectively. A bullying box has been introduced where learners report threatening behaviour anonymously. This has been very effective in resolving concerns. Learners are well supported by mentors and there are counsellors available to discuss personal problems.

44. The equality policy has been translated into simple language and is in a large font to help learners understand it better. It is also supported by a clear implementation procedure. It is introduced at induction and is also displayed in the training centres. Training videos are used to enhance learners' knowledge and understanding of equality and diversity and engage their interest. Some staff and managers have attended external training, particularly related to new legislation. This training is then shared with other members of staff, managers and learners. However, the training is not recorded. Equality is discussed during interviews with internal verifiers and learners and is reinforced at progress reviews. However, some of the questions are poorly phrased and there is little meaningful discussion. Questions are sometimes asked in the presence of learners' line managers and some learners are reluctant to discuss sensitive issues. Reinforcement of equality and diversity is insufficient in hairdressing, customer service and business administration, but is more successful in beauty therapy and E2E programmes.

45. Recruitment officers discuss employers' equal opportunities arrangements before learners begin their training programmes. A recently introduced employer pack gives guidance and sample policies if employers do not have their own and these include information on new legislation. Adherence to policies and procedures is insufficiently monitored and non-compliance is not recorded well.

46. HOET has various projects to widen participation. Strong external partnerships are

developed with schools and one project links with schools with a high proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups. Some of these pupils attend hairdressing training each week and achieve level 1 NVQ units to stimulate their interest in work-based vocational training. There are approximately 100 learners on the 14-16 programme and their experience with HOET encourages them to consider further training after leaving school. Many of the learners progress onto either E2E or apprenticeship training. There are two pre-apprenticeship courses each year to enable young people to try out activities at HOET, and these are successful in recruiting learners to E2E and apprenticeship training.

47. HOET has an insufficiently clear equal opportunities strategy. A wide range of activities is taking place to promote training to under-represented groups, but these activities are not planned within an overall framework to achieve specific targets. For example, there are individual activities to widen participation but there are no action plans with specific targets and dates. Targets are set by the LSC but there is no specific plan to ensure they are met. Collection and analysis of data is satisfactory but it is not effectively used for action-planning. There are contingency plans to support learners with restricted mobility and opportunities are sought at alternative premises, colleges and training providers. There is no action plan to accommodate these learners within HOET. Opportunities to increase participation by learners from minority ethnic groups are taken. In beauty therapy, learners from minority groups have been attracted and two of the 96 learners are men, which is very rare in this industry. HOET has increased the promotion of its training programmes to men by including relevant images in its literature and by using male learners as role models. Most of the men are now completing the framework, but the success is not analysed so that the same activities can be used again. There is no overall equal opportunities plan with targets, aims and objectives for future inclusion.

### **Quality improvement**

### **Contributory grade 2**

48. HOET has well-established procedures for quality assurance that have brought about significant improvements to its programmes.

49. Major improvements have included a number of strategies to improve the rates of retention and achievement. Strategies have included the introduction of fast-track learning which identifies learners who are at risk of leaving early. Additional staff and resources are allocated to ensure learners remain motivated and complete their programme. There has been improvements in the quality of centre resources. For example, the hairdressing salons have been updated to reflect modern commercial premises.

50. All systems and procedures are well recorded and individual managers have responsibility to keep procedures up to date for their area. Overall responsibility for the quality management system lies with the training manager for hairdressing, who holds a formal review of all processes on an annual basis and meets on a monthly basis with managers. The quality assurance manual is now in its eighth edition and is detailed and comprehensive.

51. The observation of teaching, learning and other key processes is improving the quality of programmes. A planned cycle of observations is produced annually and involves all staff being observed in their duties at least twice a year. Observations are carried out by all line managers who work across sectors. Sector-specific observations are carried out by occupationally competent internal verifiers. However, not all observations are carried out by staff with teaching/training qualifications. Observation records include comments for

corrective actions which should be corrected within 30 days. Corrective actions are monitored at the team meeting for managers.

52. The arrangements for sharing good practice between areas of learning and centres are effective. All staff are required to work across the different centres and observe peer practice. Effective, quarterly meetings include standardisation of marking of assignments and assessment decisions. Biannual sector meetings are held to share good practice across centres.

53. The self-assessment process is satisfactory. On an annual basis, all staff meet to discuss the strengths and weaknesses of their area of business. The quality management system reports, data and feedback from learners and employers are all used in this process. The development plan is closely linked to the findings in the self-assessment report through a cross-referencing process. However, the self-assessment report dated July 2004 did not reflect the provision at the time of inspection. Many of the actions in the development plan had been dealt with and inspectors gave higher grades in all areas other than hairdressing and equal opportunities. The good grade given to hairdressing in 2002 has been strongly maintained.

54. Internal verification is satisfactory. Observations of assessment and interim internal verification are well planned. Feedback from internal verifiers is challenging and gives detailed feedback to assessors on the quality of their assessment decisions and evidence produced by learners. Assessor action plans are dealt with promptly and there is good evidence of improvements. Internal verification is used effectively to monitor learners' progress. Work towards targets is monitored during the internal verification sampling process to ensure that learners are progressing. If it is identified that they are falling behind, prompt action is taken. Assessments are consistent across centres.

55. The collection and analysis of feedback from learners and employers is satisfactory. Feedback from questionnaires is reviewed at least three times during the learners' programme. HOET has introduced improvements from the feedback since it was reinspected. Improvements include changes to resources, more flexibility within the programmes and open days for employers and parents/guardians.

## AREAS OF LEARNING

### Business administration, management & professional

Grade 2

Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
<b>Business administration</b> Apprenticeships for young people	69	2
<b>Management</b> Apprenticeships for young people	3	2

56. Sixty-nine learners are in business administration, 36 of whom are apprentices, 11 are advanced apprentices and 22 are working towards NVQs. Three learners are working towards an NVQ in management. Apprentices and advanced apprentices work towards an NVQ in business administration with key skills and a technical certificate. Learners complete an initial assessment and induction before they start their programme. They are invited to attend a pre-apprenticeship course which runs over two days and covers entry to work, interview techniques, health and safety, equality of opportunity and the appeals procedure. All learners are employed in administration. Employers range from small private organisations to local government and multi-national companies. Two companies employ several learners each year. Some learners attend for off-the-job training at the training centres at Coventry and Rugby. Learners who do not attend the off-the-job training sessions, have assessors visit them at work every two weeks. Progress reviews take place in the workplace every 10 weeks. There are five assessors, two tutors for off-the-job training and two internal verifiers. This area has a training manager, a recruitment manager and a marketing manager.

#### *Strengths*

- significant improvement in retention rates for 2004-05
- good development of workplace skills
- good employer participation
- very effective action to improve the provision

#### *Weaknesses*

- some insufficient use of work-based evidence
- insufficient specialist support for learners with additional needs

### **Achievement and standards**

57. Retention rates for apprentices and advanced apprentices have improved significantly. In 2002-03, 66 per cent of learners were retained on the apprenticeship programme. In the current year, 91 per cent of learners are still in learning and one has already completed the framework. On the advanced apprenticeship programme, the eight learners who started this year are still in learning. Learners are making good progress towards completing the frameworks and achieving the NVQs.

58. Achievement rates are satisfactory. On the apprenticeship programme, achievement

rates have been consistently around 60 per cent. The advanced apprenticeship rates were low at 37 per cent in 2002-03, but the increased retention rates and the good progress made by learners is more positive. Achievement on the NVQ programme is satisfactory. Pass rates for the technical certificate are good. In March 2005, six learners passed at level 2, giving a pass rate of 100 per cent.

59. Learners develop good work skills including administration and team skills. Their confidence increases and they progress well. Tasks include credit checks, route planning, ordering stationery, organising meetings and taking minutes. All learners manage complex workloads and work effectively as part of a team. Many learners have additional responsibilities and some have been promoted at work. One learner has progressed from a general administrative position to the post of assistant personal assistant to a finance director. Another learner has been promoted to team administrator for a human resources project.

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

<b>LSC funded work-based learning</b>																
<b>Advanced apprenticeships</b>	<b>2004-05</b>		<b>2003-04</b>		<b>2002-03</b>		<b>2001-02</b>		<b>2000-01</b>							
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number of starts	8		3		8		19	100	57	100						
Retained*	0		1		3		6	32	26	46						
Successfully completed	0		1		1		4	21	25	44						
Still in learning	8		1		2		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

<b>LSC funded work-based learning</b>																
<b>Apprenticeships</b>	<b>2004-05</b>		<b>2003-04</b>		<b>2002-03</b>		<b>2001-02</b>		<b>2000-01</b>							
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number of starts	34		24		21	100	20	100	14	100						
Retained*	1		13		14	67	12	60	8	57						
Successfully completed	1		10		14	67	12	60	8	57						
Still in learning	31		5		0	0	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

<b>LSC funded work-based learning</b>																
<b>NVQ Training</b>	<b>2004-05</b>		<b>2003-04</b>		<b>2002-03</b>		<b>2001-02</b>		<b>2000-01</b>							
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number of starts	10		30		37	100	58	100	45	100						
Retained*	2		14		20	54	40	69	29	64						
Successfully completed	2		10		20	54	37	64	0	0						
Still in learning	8		14		0	0	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

60. Employers participate well in the learners' programmes. They attend progress reviews, are aware of the requirements of the apprenticeship frameworks and support learners' progress. Learners are moved between departments to ensure that the range and level of activity can be covered for unit accreditation. One employer has organised a job share between two learners to increase their breadth of experience and job satisfaction and to enhance their career prospects. All employers are supportive and encourage learners to attend off-the-job training sessions. One employer encourages and motivates learners with an annual presentation. Some employers participate in the pre-apprenticeship programme by giving advice on what employers are looking for and specifically on interview techniques. Some employers listen to the learners' presentations at the end of the pre-apprenticeship week. This event is used to showcase learners' skills and in some cases to access employment opportunities. Good links exist between assessors and employers. Learners and employers can contact the assessors by mobile telephone between visits.

61. Progress reviews take place in the workplace every 10 weeks. Action-planning is satisfactory and targets are appropriately recorded. Learners are clear about the link between the action plan and their progress towards NVQ units. Each action plan includes a percentage calculation of progress against each unit. Individual learning plans are used appropriately. Portfolios are well structured.

62. The off-the-job training has improved since the previous inspection. The training programme is published in advance. The lesson plans have clear objectives and are used well across all centres. Learning resources, including those for key skills and the technical certificates are relevant and well presented. The training is standard across centres and allows for differentiation of learners' needs. Training staff are appropriately qualified and experienced. Handouts are clear and relevant, and computer facilities at both training centres are appropriate. If learners do not attend off-the-job training sessions, assessors visit them in the workplace every two weeks.

63. Insufficient use is made of observation to assess work activities. Learners use off-the-job training to develop portfolios and type up evidence collected in the workplace. Too much emphasis is placed on learner and witness statements. For some learners, assessment by observation does not take place early enough or frequently enough. Three learners who started in 2004 have yet to be observed and another learner had just one work-based observation in 14 months. Assessment of all other types of evidence is satisfactory. Internal verification is satisfactory with interim verification sampling recorded in the portfolios. Interim reports are used by the assessors to help learners through amendments and improvements, which are then resubmitted to the internal verifier within the stated timescale. Learners are monitored and discussed at weekly review meetings. Staff are aware of problems and act quickly to resolve them.

64. There is insufficient specialist support for learners with additional needs. Learners with additional needs are identified at the initial assessment through literacy, numeracy and psychometric tests. However, there is no further assessment of their needs after induction. Tutors provide individual support, but there is no evidence that this raises literacy and numeracy skills. There is no further diagnostic or specialist support available.

## Leadership and management

65. There are very effective management actions to improve provision. Assessors and trainers are well supported in their roles and have annual performance appraisals. Monthly review meetings include monitoring the retention and achievement targets and reviews of progress of learners that each assessor has responsibility for. A very effective traffic light system is used to monitor each learner, and those highlighted as at risk of leaving early are promptly supported. Staff training needs are identified and acted upon appropriately. Staff have received training in key skills, which has improved their confidence in teaching. Staff concerns on the technical certificates have been dealt with through additional training and the development of a well-planned and appropriate training resource for use with learners. All six learners who took the test have passed the most recent level 2 technical certificate. Assessment and training sessions are regularly observed and useful feedback is given to staff. Weekly area of learning meetings are used effectively to discuss concerns. Assessors in different occupational areas meet regularly and standardisation meetings promote equality of service between the two centres. The training provider involves staff in a self-assessment away day, which in 2004-05 was based on improving retention and achievement rates. Staff who are not able to participate are given the opportunity to comment on the minutes and add their suggestions.

66. Learners have a good understanding of the appeals procedure and health and safety, and a satisfactory understanding of equality of opportunity. Assessors ask a range of questions during review visits to raise awareness of health and safety and equality of opportunity.

67. The self-assessment process includes staff, learner and employer views. The self-assessment report identified most of the strengths and weaknesses identified by inspectors. Inspectors gave a higher grade than that identified by HOET.

**Retailing, customer service & transportation****Grade 2**

<b>Contributory areas:</b>	<b>Number of learners</b>	<b>Contributory grade</b>
<b>Customer service</b>		<b>2</b>
Apprenticeships for young people	16	2

68. Sixteen learners are on customer service programmes. There are three advanced apprentices, eight apprentices and five learners on NVQ training. All learners are employed in reception areas, call centres, solicitors, marketing and advertising. Assessment takes place in the workplace. Two of the learners attend off-the-job training at the provider's premises in Coventry and others are trained at their workplace. Courses are planned over eight to 20 months. Five assessors for customer service have additional training and responsibilities in other areas of learning. Two members of staff are responsible for the quality assurance of assessment. The training manager co-ordinates customer service programmes and works with the recruitment and marketing manager.

**Customer service****Grade 2***Strengths*

- good attainment of customer service skills
- very effective assessment practice
- very good support arrangements
- good employer involvement in training programmes

*Weaknesses*

- slow implementation of the technical certificate

**Achievement and standards**

69. Learners attain a good level of practical skills in the workplace. For example, one learner demonstrated good call handling skills and gave clear technical information to callers. Learners prioritise customers' needs effectively. One learner has recorded a challenging incident at work as a case study for the qualification. Learners rapidly gain confidence in their new skills and progress well. Two newly recruited advanced apprentices have been promoted from trainees to advisers. Another learner has progressed from an E2E programme to a business administration NVQ and is now a customer service apprentice.

70. Achievement is satisfactory. Achievement rates for NVQ training were 71 per cent for 2002-03, but this programme is no longer offered. Achievement of NVQs and key skills is satisfactory at 25 per cent for 2003-04 with 25 per cent of learners still in learning. There are few advanced apprentices but 50 per cent completed the advanced apprenticeship framework in 2002-03. Retention rates are satisfactory. During the past few years, learners who have completed the planned duration of their programme, have achieved their target qualifications. Retention and achievement rates are inconsistent and show no significant trend of improvement.

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

<b>LSC funded work-based learning</b>																
<b>Advanced apprenticeships</b>	<b>2004-05</b>		<b>2003-04</b>		<b>2002-03</b>		<b>2001-02</b>		<b>2000-01</b>		<b>1999-00</b>					
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number of starts	3		0		2	100	10	100	22	100	24	100				
Retained*	0		0		1	50	7	70	8	36	5	21				
Successfully completed	0		0		1	50	3	30	4	18	5	21				
Still in learning	3		0		0	0	0	0	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

<b>LSC funded work-based learning</b>																
<b>Apprenticeships</b>	<b>2004-05</b>		<b>2003-04</b>		<b>2002-03</b>		<b>2001-02</b>		<b>2000-01</b>		<b>1999-00</b>					
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number of starts	8		4		1	100	5	100	0		1	100				
Retained*	0		1		0	0	4	80	0		0	0				
Successfully completed	0		1		0	0	4	80	0		0	0				
Still in learning	7		1		0	0	0	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

<b>LSC funded work-based learning</b>																
<b>NVQ Training</b>	<b>2004-05</b>		<b>2003-04</b>		<b>2002-03</b>		<b>2001-02</b>		<b>2000-01</b>		<b>1999-00</b>					
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number of starts	5		16		24	100	21	100	23	100	8	100				
Retained*	0		11		17	71	12	57	16	70	5	62				
Successfully completed	0		10		17	71	10	48	13	57	5	62				
Still in learning	3		2		0	0	0	0	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

71. Assessment practice is very effective. Assessors help learners to reference evidence after the first assessment and quickly become familiar with the requirements of the qualifications. Assessors accurately record their observation of learners. Learners often complete work before the assessors' next visit and request further evidence targets. Assessment procedures are consistent between assessors. Interim verification sampling records are included in portfolios.

72. Employers are closely involved in apprenticeship programmes. They are familiar with the learners' targets and make sure learners are available for assessors' visits. They attend the progress reviews and contribute valuable witness testimony for evidence. Employers offer useful in-house and external training opportunities and provide good training resources. Employers have a good rapport with HOET's staff.

73. Learners receive very effective support. They have frequent contact with their assessors at training centres, during visits to their workplaces and informally by telephone. Recruitment officers build supportive relationships with learners and often maintain telephone contact. Learners are allocated mentors to support them through the training programmes. Counselling is available to learners. One learner has been helped to gain valuable experience of working with external customers which they have been unable to do in the workplace. The learner works at the reception desk in HOET's cyber café during off-the-job training. Guidance on working practices is given by the café staff and assessment is carried out by a trainer/assessor in the café.

74. Training is satisfactory and learners gain a good understanding of customer service at work and from their trainer/assessors. Good discussion takes place between trainers and learners. However, few other teaching methods are used. Learners' rights and responsibilities and the background knowledge element of the customer service qualification are not completed early in the programme.

75. Training for the technical certificate is slow being implemented. The requirement of the framework is a choice between taking the technical certificate or additional units of the business administration NVQ. HOET has restricted the choice and learners have all taken the business administration units. Completion of the framework reduced when technical certificates were introduced. Three advanced apprentices plan to work towards the technical certificate with a new trainer/assessor but the self-assessment report recognises that other trainer/assessors do not have the knowledge to deliver the technical certificate. The provider's development plan includes actions to be taken to resolve this problem.

### **Leadership and management**

76. Staff performance is reviewed each month with line managers to set targets. A clear focus on improving retention and achievement is maintained. Trainers and assessors are well supported to gain qualifications. For example, two have gained teaching qualifications and others will be taking training and development NVQs in the near future. Observation of all activities is carried out to standardise and improve quality. However, if initial assessment indicates that learners are unlikely to meet the required key skill levels, trainer/assessors give extra support. Assessment, training and recruitment staff have insufficient expertise to identify specific additional learning needs or appropriate support. The management plans to provide training for trainer/assessors to increase their knowledge of additional learning needs.

77. Staff and managers carry out a self-assessment each year and the most recent report identified most of the strengths and weakness identified by inspectors. The improved initial assessment has not yet significantly increased the number of frameworks completed as predicted in the report. Staff and managers have taken action to deal with the weaknesses related to training for the technical certificates.

78. Learners are sufficiently aware of the complaints and appeals procedures. However, reinforcement of equality does not always promote discussion at reviews. Questions are asked relating to equality and this raises the learners' awareness. Thirty-eight per cent of the learners in customer service are men, but occupational gender stereotypes are not challenged during recruitment. A six-monthly equality forum and an employer guide have been introduced to raise the employers' awareness of equality of opportunity. However,

the employers that were interviewed during inspection had not attended or used either. Access for people with restricted mobility is successfully negotiated for individuals as the need arises.

**Hairdressing & beauty therapy****Grade 2**

<b>Contributory areas:</b>	<b>Number of learners</b>	<b>Contributory grade</b>
<b><i>Hairdressing</i></b> Apprenticeships for young people	422	<b>2</b> 2
<b><i>Beauty therapy</i></b> Apprenticeships for young people	96	<b>2</b> 2

79. HOET offers training in hairdressing and beauty therapy. There are 422 learners in hairdressing, 303 of whom are apprentices working towards NVQs at level 2 and 87 are advanced modern apprentices working towards NVQs at level 3. There are 32 learners on an NVQ programme. Eighty-one hairdressing learners have additional learning needs. Learners are recruited throughout the year, but most start in the summer after finishing school. Many of the learners apply directly to HOET or are referred by their employers or Connexions. Most of the learners attend HOET's training centres for training and are assessed at the training centre and at work. Background knowledge and assessment takes place on employers' premises for 155 learners. Hairdressing training takes place in Coventry, Rugby, Birmingham and Leicester, and most of the learners attend on a day-release basis. Five peripatetic assessors carry out workplace training and assessment approximately every two weeks. HOET work with 174 salons across Coventry and Warwickshire, Birmingham and Solihull and Leicestershire. There are 24 hairdressing staff, including two internal verifiers and four recruitment officers. There are 16 trainer/assessors and two trainee assessors. Five per cent of learners are from minority ethnic groups and 9 per cent are men.

80. There are 96 learners on beauty therapy programmes, of whom 50 are apprentices and 46 are working towards NVQs. Two learners are employed. Training takes place in Rugby, Coventry, Birmingham and Leicester. All learners are working towards the NVQ at level 2, while apprentices are completing key skills in communication at level 1. All learners attend the centre on three days a week. They complete an initial assessment and induction before they start their programme. They also complete a two-week trial which includes opportunities to experience various aspects of the programme. Progress reviews take place every 10 weeks. All current learners have additional learning, and, in some cases, social needs. There are six trainer/assessors, four internal verifiers, two of whom are active, four centre managers, two recruitment officers and a senior manager. There are seven full-time and six part-time staff. All are qualified beauty therapists and seven are still working in the industry.

***Hairdressing******Grade 2******Strengths***

- good and improving retention rates
- good achievement rates for the frameworks and NVQs
- wide range of clients promotes good development of technical skills
- comprehensive evidence in portfolios to support the achievement of the NVQ and key skills

- well-managed flexible training

### Weaknesses

- some unsatisfactory background knowledge training to meet individual needs

### Achievement and standards

81. Retention rates have improved considerably in hairdressing and are now good across all programmes. For advanced apprentices they have increased from 61 per cent in 2001-02 to 100 per cent for 2004-05. For apprentices the retention rates have increased from 56 per cent to 83 per cent. For NVQ learners, the retention rates have increased from 46 per cent to 94 per cent for 2004-05.

82. The completion rates for the framework are good. For advanced apprentices they have improved from 38 per cent in 2000-01 to a potential 58 per cent for those learners who started in 2002-03. For apprentices, the achievement rate has remained at a constant level of between 55 per cent and 58 per cent since 2000, and is likely to remain so for the learners who are still in learning. The achievement rate on NVQ programmes is good. Since 2000, between 46 per cent and 65 per cent of learners have achieved the NVQ, and at the time of the inspection, a further 12 learners achieved.

83. Most of the learners are achieving within their target dates and many achieve ahead of time. Learners' practical skills are developing well and in some cases are above what would be expected. For example, one learner who had been training for only 10 months, carried out creative texturising techniques. Also, the blow drying skills demonstrated by several learners emphasised the dexterity they had developed when using brushes and hand dryers. Learners are aware of progression routes and many plan to progress to level 3 programmes.

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

<b>LSC funded work-based learning</b>																
<b>Advanced apprenticeships</b>	<b>2004-05</b>		<b>2003-04</b>		<b>2002-03</b>		<b>2001-02</b>		<b>2000-01</b>		<b>1999-00</b>		<b>1998-99</b>			
	No.	%	No.	%												
Number of starts	26		49		60		54		103		120		82	100		
Retained*	1		0		42		33		45		49		21	26		
Successfully completed	0		0		8		30		39		48		20	24		
Still in learning	26		29		27		1		3		1		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		2000-01		1999-00		1998-99			
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number of starts	224		198		178		80	100	64	100	65	100	26	100		
Retained*	0		11		111		45	56	38	59	17	26	3	12		
Successfully completed	0		7		101		44	55	37	58	17	26	1	4		
Still in learning	186		113		4		0	0	0	0	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		2000-01		1999-00					
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number of starts	16		21		40		65	100	59	100	23	100				
Retained*	0		1		20		42	65	27	46	8	35				
Successfully completed	0		1		13		40	62	27	46	8	35				
Still in learning	15		10		7		0	0	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

84. A wide range of clients helps to develop technical skills. This was recognised in the self-assessment report. The clients vary in age and include men. The range of treatments and services requested by clients ensures that learners develop good technical skills, which in some cases are more advanced than would be expected for that particular stage in their training. The partnership arrangements with the salons ensure that services that are not routinely carried out are taught in the training centres. For example, perming and setting techniques are often taught and assessed in the centres. Learners show a high degree of client care and are confident when communicating with their clients. The peripatetic assessor ensures that the standards are met for the NVQ, while the employer assesses that the performance has met the requirements for the salon. If both aspects of assessment are met, the learner is then allowed to practise their skills commercially in the salon. Many level 3 learners run their own client column.

85. Assessments are carried out appropriately in training centres and employer salons. They are well evidenced and recorded. Portfolios are comprehensive and imaginatively produced. All the necessary evidence for their NVQ and key skills is present, which includes projects and assignments. The use of information technology (IT) is routine, even for learners who have chosen not to take the optional key skill. Digital cameras are frequently used to record evidence for the NVQ and the key skills in communication. Those who do not use IT to produce projects and assignments, still use creative and imaginative techniques to produce colourful and interesting work.

86. The good teaching shows careful preparation, such as ensuring pre-prepared hairdressing blocks, and products are available to promote discussion. The good practical teaching involves staff giving close attention to individual learners, intervening when necessary and getting learners to demonstrate their understanding of hairdressing

techniques. In one practical session, staff and learners gave a high priority to health and safety. However, in another session, personal protective equipment was not used by the learner or the trainer, pins and combs were held in the mouth, and perm lotion was allowed to run onto the scalp. Some of the background knowledge sessions do not engage the learners throughout the session and do not allow for different learning styles. Learners in some sessions are required to copy notes from either a pre-prepared whiteboard or from flip charts, for long periods of time. Some of the notes that learners are required to copy contain spelling errors for key technical terms as well as punctuation errors that were replicated by the learners. Key spellings were not corrected in their portfolios. Learners' questions are not always clearly answered. The lesson plans do not account for the individual learning requirements of the learners, nor do they make the learning outcomes explicit. There is no mechanism to check the level of learning that has taken place. The good practice observed in teaching is not always shared between trainers. Learners who are trained in their salons gain some of their background knowledge by reading a textbook and then writing notes to summarise their reading. Although their work is checked by the peripatetic assessor, this style of learning is reliant on literacy skills that some learners find difficult or demotivating when carried out in isolation.

87. Support for literacy and numeracy is provided mainly by individual sessions. Learners take key skills assessment tests as part of the initial assessment and appropriate basic skills tests depending on the key skills results. Although substantial numbers of learners have additional learning needs these are generally being met. For example, laptop computers have been used to support learners with dyslexia. Learners are not retested to identify whether the support has improved their literacy and numeracy skills. The need for staff training to better support learners has been recognised and is already scheduled to take place.

88. Accommodation in centres is to a professional standards, with a good range of products and resources to support learning. Learners work in good salons with access to IT equipment. The range and the modes of delivery of programmes meet the needs of learners and employers. Progress is monitored and learners and employers are aware of the learners' progress. Although targets are not broken down into small steps, learners understand what they need to do. Learners in all four centres have access to professional counselling if they need it.

### **Leadership and management**

89. There are monthly meetings for hairdressing staff at each centre to focus on the learners' performance. These are scheduled so that all staff can attend. Centre managers are set individual targets by their line managers on a monthly basis and meet quarterly. There are a series of other meetings that involve specific functions such as recruitment and internal verification. Staff with the same job functions are encouraged to work at other centres to experience how others deliver training or perform a job role. This forms part of the staff development for new staff who work shadow those in similar roles. Holiday cover is often given by staff from other centres. In this way communication is encouraged between centres. Employers are chosen because of their standards and commitment to training. Most give their learners additional learning opportunities such as manufacturers' courses and attendance at trade shows. In a few salons, learners are encouraged to enter competitions and have the opportunity to assist senior staff.

90. In the current contract year, particularly effective measures have been put in place to

improve retention. These include the award of bronze, silver and gold badges when learners achieve three NVQ units. There is a logbook in each centre to record concerns, and these are promptly followed up and recorded. A traffic light system is used to identify problems with learners' progress. If learners are at risk of not completing the framework, they may be fast-tracked by attending a centre for three days a week. Postcards are sent to learners if they do not attend their training. Reviews clearly show where learners are on each unit, as a percentage. Key skills testing has been made available online and this is encouraging learners to achieve. Equal opportunities is reinforced at centres and for most learners in the workplace. All learners know about complaints procedures. HOET is attracting men into hairdressing, but is not attracting many learners from minority ethnic groups. Staff are appropriately qualified and many work regularly in salons to keep their skills up to date. Many have recently taken key skills qualifications. Managers have made a decision to keep a low ratio of learners to staff in practical sessions, to ensure learners receive individual attention.

91. Internal verification is used effectively across the four training centres and for the peripatetic assessors. In addition to the routine verification, the internal verifier uses the opportunity to gather management information to check progress against targets, to identify learners who may be at risk of leaving the programme and to gather employer feedback. All staff attend monthly meetings which include regular exercises on standardisation.

### ***Beauty therapy***

***Grade 2***

#### *Strengths*

- good retention rates
- rapid development of good workplace skills
- wide range of enrichment activities
- flexible programme promoting good progression
- good participation from under-represented groups

#### *Weaknesses*

- some uninspiring teaching for background knowledge
- insufficient specialist support for learners with additional learning and social needs

### **Achievement and standards**

92. Learners quickly develop good practical skills and work confidently with a diverse range of clients. Learners have well-developed interpersonal skills which are used to clarify individual client treatment needs. Learners demonstrate a high level of client care and maintain a professional image. In three of the four sites there is a good client base that enables learners to build their practical skills. All learners are motivated and show enthusiasm for learning new skills. They are keen to complete their qualifications as early as possible. Their portfolios are well structured and include a good range of evidence that is easily attributed to the individual. Digital cameras are used effectively to record the learners' work.

93. There are good retention rates for the NVQ and for the apprenticeship programmes.

In 2002-03, 86 per cent of learners were retained on the NVQ programme, and one learner is still in learning. In 2003-04, 68 per cent were retained and six are still in learning. For 2004-05, 4 per cent of the 46 learners who started completed their framework early and 85 per cent are still in learning. For the apprentices, of the 23 learners who started in 2003-04, 48 per cent were retained and 39 per cent are still in learning. For 2004-05, 98 per cent of the 46 learners who started are still in learning. Achievement rates are satisfactory on all programmes. Key skills qualifications are now being achieved satisfactorily.

94. Progress rates for learners are good. In 2003-04, four learners completed their framework before the target date, and 13 from the 2004-05 intake have already completed the framework. A further 13 apprentices are still on programme and eight of the NVQ starters for 2004-05 are on target to complete early. The fast-track route is used for learners who demonstrate good skills and knowledge or for when personal circumstances demand early completion. There is an effective system in place to monitor learners' progress. Learners are motivated and take responsibility to achieve targets as early as possible. Learners have clear understanding of their targets which are reinforced during the 10-weekly review meetings.

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

LSC funded work-based learning																	
Apprenticeships	2004-05		2003-04														
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
Number of starts	42		23														
Retained*	0		11														
Successfully completed	0		6														
Still in learning	41		9														

\*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												
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
Number of starts	46		72		35												
Retained*	2		49		30												
Successfully completed	2		45		29												
Still in learning	39		6		1												

\*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

95. There is a wide range of enrichment activities for learners and these are also used as professional development opportunities for staff. Examples include courses on henna tattooing, tanning treatments, application of tooth gems, sugaring, alternative waxing techniques and ear piercing. Learners are given the opportunity do competition work and attend manufacturer upgrading events on new products. Tutors who are qualified in techniques which are above the requirements for the level 2 NVQ are already planning

how best to use their skills for the planned level 3 programme. Opportunities to attend work experience have improved through the development of a work-experience project. This has involved high levels of marketing to salons to raise awareness of the programme and its requirements. Recruitment officers have used the internet to identify salons in the areas surrounding the four centres. A small number of salons have signed up to offer work experience, while others are contacting the organisation to find out more about future training opportunities for their own staff. Additional sessions on jobsearch have been added to the timetable.

96. Training takes place for five days a week at all centres. Learners can arrange their training days to suit personal circumstances. The trainers are very aware of the learners' social needs and adapt the training to suit the circumstances. Feedback is regularly collected from learners and changes have been made to the programmes. For example, it was identified that attendance and punctuality were a problem with one particular group. When the problem was analysed it appeared that most of the learners had childcare commitments in the morning and the timetable was rescheduled. The centre now makes healthy breakfasts available for learners and attendance and punctuality have improved.

97. The ratio of learners to each tutor is good in all practical training sessions. Team teaching takes place and learners are promptly supported. Additional individual support takes place when required and this maintains the learners' enthusiasm and interest. A wide range of resources meets the requirements of the different learning styles. Upgrading of the product range is ongoing to allow learners to use a wide variety of products in practical sessions. A small retail range has been introduced to enhance learners' skills in retailing products and services. Many of the learners progress onto higher-level qualifications or into the industry. There are good links with the local schools and a well-attended level 1 introductory programme for young people who are excluded from schools. Progression from this programme to apprenticeships and NVQ programmes is good.

98. Assessment is carried out to awarding body requirements and documents are completed appropriately. Feedback is constructive for observations and written assessments and learners are able to focus on further assessment opportunities. A number of inexperienced assessors have recently qualified or are still working towards their awards.

99. Teaching is satisfactory. However, some of the background knowledge sessions predominantly use dictation, copying and note-taking. Learners are asked to copy full pages of writing from overhead projector slides which are poorly produced. All learners in beauty therapy have additional learning needs, and for some learners the copying is taking excessive time. Some learners are disengaged and lack enthusiasm, but others are able to confidently ask questions. Lesson plans are poorly written and the content of the session does not always reflect the plan. Outcomes are unclear and there is no identification of learning methods throughout the session. There is no record of resources required or information relating to differentiation. There are some good practical and background knowledge sessions, where tutors use more imaginative teaching methods to engage the learners. As yet, this good practice is not shared across the team. There are a number of inexperienced tutors within the training team.

100. During the initial interview, recruitment officers carry out literacy and numeracy tests with the learners and record the results on the individual learning plans. Further tests are completed at induction and these results are also used to identify learners' needs. All

learners in beauty therapy have additional learning needs and many have social needs. Tutors offer effective individual support to enable learners to achieve their qualifications. However, none of the staff are qualified or have experience in this area. Training for staff who teach basic skills is organised for the near future. In some centres, problems related to attendance and punctuality are linked with challenging behaviours. Staff deal with disciplinary action but do not have specialist skills to manage the challenging behaviour. A counsellor is available for learners and these services are well used.

### **Leadership and management**

101. The management of training is good and training is well planned. Staff fulfil their roles and responsibilities successfully. The four centres work efficiently and the needs of the learners are a priority at all times. Good communication take place with quarterly sector meetings and monthly centre meetings. Continuity and improvement are given a high profile within the team. There has been a rapid turnover of staff in beauty therapy, but this has now stabilised, and team developments and improvements are taking place. There is an effective staff appraisal and review process which identifies staff development and continuing professional development needs. All staff are encouraged to improve their technical and teaching skills. Staff are deployed effectively and plans are formulated for future changes in programme delivery. Daily contact and frequent visits enable management to understand operational concerns. All team members attend meetings to discuss consistency. There are good links with the hairdressing team, which often joins the meetings to share good practice. The managing director also attends these meetings. Management are approachable and supportive and they encourage development across the team.

102. Effective monitoring and analysis of learners' progress is discussed on a monthly basis with trainer/assessors, and necessary amendments to targets are made. Each centre has a chart on the salon wall to keep learners informed of their progress. Motivation is supported by a variety of reward schemes which include learner of the month and learner of the year. There is also a pin badge reward scheme where learners can earn bronze, silver or gold badges for achieving NVQ units. Good links have been forged with an outside organisation to support young people who are unable to find work. The organisation funds them for six to nine months on level 2 programmes. Many of these people leave with full qualifications. Internal verification identifies inconsistent practices and clear actions are recorded and followed up with the assessors. Further work is required to ensure learners are comfortable with the process of planning for assessment. Although many staff are new, they are aware of the self-assessment process and current report. HOET has engaged under-represented groups in beauty therapy. There are two men and 23 per cent of learners are from minority ethnic groups.

**Foundation programmes****Grade 2**

<b>Contributory areas:</b>	<b>Number of learners</b>	<b>Contributory grade</b>
<b><i>Employability/employment training</i></b>		<b>2</b>
Entry to Employment	20	2

103. There are 20 learners on E2E programme. Learners are referred by Connexions and they also refer themselves. Some learners progress to E2E from HOET's provision for 14-16 year olds from local schools. Learners are based in Rugby and Coventry. Learners have a six-week initial assessment, followed by a range of programme options including NVQs in hairdressing, business administration or IT at level 1. All learners are offered the opportunity to attend a work taster or a work-experience placement. Most of the learners attend for 16 hours a week and increase this as they progress through the programme. Progress reviews are carried out every four weeks. E2E is managed by the training manager with an E2E trainer/assessor at each training centre. The E2E co-ordinator and two recruitment officers are managed by the marketing and recruitment manager.

***Employability/employment training*****Grade 2***Strengths*

- good achievement rates and progression
- wide range of learning activities
- very effective employer links
- very effective employer links

*Weaknesses*

- no formal individual learning plans for literacy and numeracy

**Achievement and standards**

104. A high proportion of learners progress into an apprenticeship, further education or employment. In 2003-04, 13 per cent of starters progressed onto an apprenticeship. This has increased to 31 per cent this year. In 2003-04, 56 per cent of starters achieved an NVQ at level 1 and 36 per cent have achieved so far this year. There is a strong relationship between NVQ achievement and positive progression. Since the beginning of E2E in 2003-04, 90 per cent of learners who gained an NVQ progressed into further education or work. Nearly all learners achieve a level 1 certificate in career planning. Learners also achieve personal goals and all learners increase their confidence and are able to recognise this.

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	69		79	100												
Progression <sup>1</sup>	24		41	52												
Achieved objectives <sup>2</sup>	35		47	59												
Still in learning	20		0	0												

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

105. Learners benefit from the very wide range of activities. The 22-week programme includes six weeks for initial assessment. There are detailed session plans and resources. Specific NVQ training is carried out by the E2E trainer/assessors for business administration and IT and by the hairdressing training team. In business administration and IT, learners carry out work for HOET, including producing handouts for the training sessions. There is little evidence from work experience. The personal development activities range from guest speakers on drug awareness, driving and sexual health training, to activity days such as orienteering, activities with the fire service and team building. There are sessions on equality on a regular basis and these include videos, cultural days and anti-bullying training.

106. The E2E programme is very focused on employment. There are a lot of activities related to jobsearch, interview training and producing a curriculum vitae. The certificate in career planning focuses these activities into a progressive framework. 'Smart' days are regularly held when learners wear clothes which are appropriate for an interview. All learners are encouraged to participate in some form of work experience. This is well planned and offers very supportive opportunities, as well as full-time four-week placements in commercial companies. Many learners progress from their work experience into full-time employment linked to an apprenticeship. The very effective links with employers ensure that the placements are relevant for individual learners. Many employers are involved in other activities at HOET, such as training sessions on employment and interviews. Employers have a high regard for HOET and are prepared to support them in working with learners.

107. There is good support for learners. Trainers plan for individual outcomes from learning sessions and provide additional support when required. Work placements are planned individually. Learners have help to prepare for interviews, even after they have left the E2E programme. Counselling sessions are available through a subcontracted counsellor who is available on a flexible basis.

108. Initial assessment is satisfactory with a range of activities taking place. However, some of the tests carried out at interview use complex language which is difficult for learners who are at entry level in literacy. The recruitment officers offer additional support to complete tests where it is required. Information on the E2E passports is detailed with clear end targets. However, the activities are not broken down into smaller targets. The

learners' daily activity sheets are used as part of the review process and the records in the E2E Passport are detailed. Accommodation is satisfactory with access to resources and computers. There is a wide range of learning materials. Staff have appropriate experience of working with young people and there is a planned staff development programme.

109. Learners receive effective individual support. This includes help with literacy and numeracy to enable them to complete their NVQ and key skills qualifications. However, there are no formal individual learning plans for literacy and numeracy. Initial assessment is carried out satisfactorily. Most learners are working towards qualifications at a level above their assessed literacy and numeracy levels. Literacy and numeracy support is recorded as a series of learning modules, but there is insufficient detail and formality to ensure learners will progress. Informal planning provides a brief outline of individual targets, but staff are not experienced enough or qualified to ensure that this is sufficiently detailed. Staff have enrolled on courses recently to rectify this problem.

### **Leadership and management**

110. The management have regular team meetings where actions are identified and carried out. There is good communication internally and with employers and external organisations.

111. Equality of opportunity is satisfactory and learners receive a comprehensive induction which is reinforced by regular sessions. Equality of opportunity is covered at reviews and learners are knowledgeable about their rights and responsibilities.

112. Quality improvement measures are effective. Actions arise from either the annual self-assessment report or from feedback from learners and employers. Actions are recorded and reviewed to ensure they have been effectively implemented. The E2E team was involved in the self-assessment report and views were included from learners and employers. The report was produced 11 months ago and E2E has developed since then.

