

INSPECTION REPORT

Huddersfield Textile Training Limited

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
- **learnndirect** 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. Huddersfield Textile Training Limited (HTTL) is a not-for-profit training company that was formed in 1976 to meet the training needs of local textile manufacturers. Based in Huddersfield, West Yorkshire, it is a subsidiary company of the Huddersfield District Textile Training Company Limited. A board of directors comprising representatives from member companies controls HTTL. In 1998, HTTL was recognised as a textile centre of excellence by the regional development agency, Yorkshire Forward. HTTL currently employs 18 full-time members of staff to support the training programmes. The managing director leads a senior management team of four. This includes a newly appointed director of textiles training, a training manager and a workforce development manager supported by nine assessors, a manager in accounts, quality, health and safety, and two administration co-ordinators with responsibility for data.

2. Training at HTTL is funded through contracts with the West Yorkshire Learning and Skills Council (LSC) to deliver apprenticeship programmes and train2gain, an employer training pilot (ETP). The company also has a contract with Jobcentre Plus to deliver New Deal for young people and New Deal 25+ short job-focused training (SJFT) lift-truck awards. HTTL offers training for apprentices and advanced apprentices in manufacturing textiles, mechanical and electrical engineering, and print and printed packaging.

3. The company subcontracts with five local organisations to deliver a range of training. Edward Marshall delivers the technical certificate in textiles. Kirkdale Industrial Training Services (KITS) delivers the engineering national vocational qualification (NVQ). AB Consultants delivers the additional qualifications for the lift truck award, health and safety, fire and emergency, and first aid. MS Training Consultants Limited delivers the printers' technical certificate and NVQ and Huddersfield Technical College, the Open College Network for electrical engineering apprenticeship. The larger subcontractors had all been inspected recently.

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS

Grade 3

4. **The overall effectiveness of the provision is satisfactory.** HTTL's leadership and management are satisfactory, as are its arrangements for equality of opportunity and quality improvement. In engineering, technology and manufacturing, the provision is satisfactory. In retailing, customer service and transportation, the Jobcentre Plus provision is good.

5. **The inspection team had some confidence in the reliability of the self-assessment process.** The company's self-assessment report is completed annually and takes into account the views of learners, staff, employers, directors, funding bodies and network partner organisations. The self-assessment report identified many of the strengths and weaknesses found by inspection, but it failed to identify some key weaknesses and strengths that were subsequently identified. Self-assessment does not include sufficient evaluative judgements and staff do not yet see it as a tool to manage improvement.

6. The provider has demonstrated that it has sufficient capacity to make improvements.

The self-assessment report is satisfactory, but the formal updating of the resulting action plan is not. Managers discuss the self-assessment action plan at management meetings but there has been little formal recording of progress against the required actions. The provider has recently developed a number of strategies to improve the provision and tutors and assessors have a good commitment to improvement.

KEY CHALLENGES FOR HUDDERSFIELD TEXTILE TRAINING LIMITED:

- establish systems to deliver more sophisticated reports and reliable data
- sustain and further develop strategies to improve retention and achievement
- set challenging targets to improve performance
- develop a strategy for literacy, numeracy and language support
- sustain and develop partnerships
- further develop the quality improvement of teaching and learning
- formalise action-planning as a working tool for all staff

GRADES

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

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

Engineering, technology & manufacturing			3
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade	
Mechanical engineering			
Apprenticeships for young people	7	3	
Manufacturing			
Apprenticeships for young people	32	3	
Employer training pilot	23	3	

Retailing, customer service & transportation			2
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade	
Lift-truck awards			
New Deal 25+ and work-based learning for adults	16	2	
Employer training pilot	6	2	

ABOUT THE INSPECTION

7. Engineering, technology and manufacturing received an overall area of learning grade which included the areas of mechanical engineering and manufacturing textiles. Retailing, customer service and transportation received an overall grade which included the lift-truck award. Train2gain, a very recent initiative that no learners have completed, was reported under the area of learning but not graded. A small number of print learners in the visual and performing arts and media area of learning were included in the overall evidence base to support judgements in the key findings section of the report.

Number of inspectors	4
Number of inspection days	17
Number of learners interviewed	24
Number of staff interviewed	33
Number of employers interviewed	7
Number of subcontractors interviewed	2
Number of locations/sites/learning centres visited	17
Number of partners/external agencies interviewed	5

KEY FINDINGS

Achievements and standards

8. **HTTL and employers celebrate apprentices' achievements in manufacturing textiles, mechanical engineering and print.** The training group invites employers and learners to an annual presentation of certificates. West Yorkshire training providers have an apprentice of the month award. A learner from HTTL suggested a better technique for a new fabric to cover bus seats and was awarded a cash prize and a miniature bus seat covered in the fabric. The main centre has large framed photographs and a display of newspaper cuttings. This a strategy the company has implemented to build on and contribute to retention.

9. **Learners on SJFT develop their workplace skills very well.** Tutors have high expectations of their learners and emphasise achievement and personal success. Eighty-two per cent of SJFT learners achieve additional qualifications. The personal development and jobsearch sessions improve learners' confidence, self-awareness and motivation to find work. Learners develop a very good awareness of safe working practice in the home and at work.

10. Learners on SJFT courses achieve their lift truck drivers' licence at a satisfactory rate. Between April 2004 and March 2005, 77 per cent of learners aged 18 to 24 and 82 per cent of learners aged over 25 achieved the aims of their courses. In the same period, 38 per cent of learners aged between 18 to 24 and 35 per cent of learners aged over 25 gained employment. HTTL has recently introduced initiatives to improve job outcomes, such as better monitoring of leavers, improved jobsearch and improved links with

employment agencies, but it is too early to determine the effect of these. Retention is good at 90 per cent for 2004-05, and job outcomes are satisfactory.

11. The ETP NVQ training on the train2gain programme meets the business needs of participating companies. Retention on skills for life and NVQ programmes is satisfactory. Skills for life is the government's strategy on training in literacy, numeracy and the use of language.

12. Retention and achievement on the apprenticeship programme are satisfactory. In 2001-02, 13 per cent of learners successfully completed the programme and 63 per cent were retained. The new senior management team in 2002 initiated a number of strategies to improve provision, such as better monitoring of learners, increased employer visits and achievement targets for subcontractors. In 2003-04, 71 per cent of learners were retained and 61 per cent completed full frameworks. During 2002-04, there were a number of learner redundancies. Out of 21 starts in 2004-05, there are 17 in learning and a maximum of 82 per cent retention and achievement.

13. **Learners on the advanced manufacturing textiles programme make slow progress and achievement in 2001-02 was poor.** Retention is poor but improving. Over a three-year period, there is a drop in early leavers, moving from 75 per cent in 2001-02 to 44 per cent in 2003-04. There are no early leavers for 2004-05.

14. **There is slow progress on the advanced apprenticeships for mechanical engineering.** There has been no achievement of completed engineering apprenticeship frameworks in the past four years. Out of 13 advanced apprentices that started the programme, seven are still in learning and six left the programme early.

The quality of provision

Grades given to learning sessions

	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Total
Engineering, technology & manufacturing	0	0	7	0	7
Retailing, customer service & transportation	1	3	3	0	7
Total	1	3	10	0	14

15. **The learning programme for manufacturing textiles apprentices is planned so that key skills are integrated with the technical certificate and on- and off-the-job training.** HTTL work effectively with employers to ensure that the technical certificate and key skills content is appropriately work related. Learners are motivated to complete the work and benefit from the opportunity to broaden their knowledge about the company they work for and to understand how their job role contributes to the organisational structure. The learners value the opportunities to gain further information technology (IT) skills.

16. **Assessors and employers provide particularly good support for manufacturing textile learners in the workplace.** Assessors visit every two weeks. Assessors and training supervisors work together to promote the learners' welfare, give advice and guidance, and support the learners' progress on the programme. Pre-arranged appointments support the continuation of the production line. Assessors, training supervisors and the learners attend

reviews every eight weeks and each of them receives a copy of the review outcomes. Many of the learners work shifts and the assessors carry out evening visits. Learners receive individual support for additional learning needs and assessors take laptop computers into the workplace to support the completion of key skills work.

17. Learners in manufacturing textiles have access to a high standard of learning environments and equipment. The main centre has conference room facilities, industry-level equipment in the textiles area, and two very well-equipped IT suites. Employers set aside quiet rooms for off-the-job training. Learners have access to the internet and laptop computers in the workplace.

18. Practical lift truck training is very good. Tutors provide very effective encouragement and support for less able learners. When learners fail to meet the required standard, tutors discuss clear targets for improvement. Tutors allow learners extra time for those who require it and arrange additional testing for those who fail at the first attempt. The celebration of learners' success and progress takes place regularly. Tutors provide a good outline of awarding body tests requirements throughout the training sessions, which helps the learners to understand what is required of them.

19. SJFT resources and accommodation are very good. Training rooms at the main centre are very well furnished to commercial standards and are air-conditioned, well lit and spacious. A very good range of training aids and resources is available for learners at the main centre. Practical facilities at the lift truck training centre are very good. Recently opened, this centre provides clearly defined indoor and outdoor training areas for reach and counter-balance training, and offices, a training room and a refreshment room. Warehouses are tidy and efficient. Private rooms are available for review meetings and internet access is provided.

20. Pre-course information and advice are good. Posters and publicity materials are displayed prominently on the company's noticeboards. Assessors meet individually with learners to further explain the NVQ before they join the course. Additional information sessions are arranged for learners enrolled on skills for life courses. Pre-course information sessions at the training centre are held every two weeks to help learners find out about the SJFT course. Potential learners are introduced to staff, receive a course overview and take part in a centre tour. A learndirect lift truck course has been introduced recently to provide learners with additional information about lift truck driving and the requirements of the background knowledge.

21. Teaching and learning are very good on the print technical certificate. Twenty print advanced apprentices have enrolled since the programme started in 2002, 13 of whom are still in learning and two have completed full frameworks. Employers value the improvements in assessor support, learners' achievement of modules and exam results since HTTL took over the off-the-job training.

22. Teaching and learning are satisfactory on the textile manufacturing course. Some of the classes observed are tutor-led and rely excessively on handouts.

23. Classroom teaching is satisfactory on the SJFT programmes. In the better sessions, tutors check learners' progress and understanding very well and use effective teaching strategies to engage the learners' interest. Tutors have a particularly good understanding of

the needs of adult learners. However, in the weaker sessions, learning is tutor-led, with insufficient involvement of the learners.

24. The ETPs in manufacturing textiles are running in six companies and have 23 learners on the course. It is too early for any of the learners to have finished the programme. The learners interviewed were enthusiastic, knowledgeable and are producing good portfolios. The learning is well planned.

25. **Initial assessment on SJFT is insufficient.** The learners' literacy, numeracy and language skills and previous course information are not routinely recorded from Jobcentre Plus to help tutors establish a starting point for each learner. Individual job goals for learners are insufficiently established and learning plans contain few targets. HTTL does not record learners' additional support needs or pass them to tutors delivering short courses during the day. Plans for classroom sessions do not detail activities to meet the needs of individuals within the group.

Leadership and management

26. **HTTL has undergone significant strategic change and development.** Following the appointment of a new managing director in April 2002, and a new training manager in 2004, the company has made modifications to strategic and operational planning. A newly formed senior management team is developing collaborative, accountable and inclusive working practices. Staff speak positively about the clarity of new ways of working, the focus on professional development and performance objectives. Meetings are regular, effective and outcomes are communicated at all levels. The teams have developed a number of new strategies that focus on learners' progression, retention and achievement.

27. **HTTL has good strategic focus and direction.** Staff have a clear sense of future direction within the company. Job roles and responsibilities are clear. The provider has a strong vision for the development of the centre and future programmes to develop the industry and has recently received Centre of Vocational Excellence (CoVE) status approval for manufacturing textiles. A key strategic priority in the business plan is improvements in learners' retention, progression and achievements. The board contributes expertise and knowledge to the planning and implementation of new and existing programmes, and in supporting and monitoring the programmes. The performance improvement group has been a successful strategy that has focused the board, staff, employers and learners on improving performance. HTTL now has more effective monitoring of the provision, tighter contractual arrangements with subcontractors, increased visits for learners identified at risk of leaving training, and more effective individual support for learners.

28. **Partnership working is a key strategic priority at HTTL.** Seventy textile manufacturing members influence the company through its board of directors. The membership is kept up to date with annual general meetings, a newsletter, and regular circulars outlining wider funding and training opportunities. Learners benefit from the combined expertise of the positive employer links that contributed to the development of the technical training certificates to make it more relevant to learners and employers. Very effective links with a range of key regional and national organisations has led to the company receiving CoVE status to develop progression routes for the manufacturing textiles programme. The provider has good links with local schools. During their placement within the textiles centre, pupils are supported to develop a realistic project to contribute to their final school

exams.

29. HTTL has formed effective partnership arrangements with the local Indian and Muslim Welfare Society and the Pakistan Kashmir Welfare Association. They are instrumental in piloting projects to provide suitable IT learning packages for their communities. For example, a commercially available CD-ROM providing basic computer skills, with voice-over translations into Urdu, Punjabi, Gujarati and Bangla, is now available as a direct result of these links. Marketing materials for courses in Gujarati and Urdu are particularly aimed at parents of potential learners, to provide them with information about the training and qualifications available.

30. HTTL makes good use of evaluation feedback to improve the quality of the services it offers to learners and employers. It formally seeks learners' feedback comments through questionnaires. In response to the comments from learners' and employers' questionnaires, the company has made significant improvements, such as a new telephone system to improve learners' links with the training provider, additional car parking spaces created for learners and visitors to the centre, and air-conditioning in the main conference room for better comfort. All learners access and benefit from the new computers in the IT training rooms and from a new website for improved access to information about the company and training materials and resources.

31. The company's management of resources is satisfactory. The finance manager effectively plans, allocates and monitors all budgets, in discussion with the senior management team. Budgets are balanced and a small surplus is set aside for growth. Financial reports are prepared for the board three times a year. Operational teams put forward their plans and requirements for programmes and any new developments. Targets are set for contract compliance and budget targets set for income generation.

32. Health and safety are satisfactory. A key person has identified responsibilities. There are clear policies and procedures. HTTL vets all potential companies. Health and safety monitoring is a key part of the progress review meetings.

33. Accessibility is satisfactory. The main training centre has good access and facilities for people with disabilities and, in December 2002, it was awarded third prize in a local disability rights accessible buildings contest. Also, the lift truck centre has access and facilities for people with disabilities. There is only one learner with a declared disability and the provider has limited adaptive technologies.

34. Internal verification is satisfactory. NVQ and key skills courses undergo regular, planned internal and external verification to check the quality of the assessments and evidence for the awards. The system for internally verifying NVQ and key skill qualifications is well planned and thorough. However, inspectors did find that the process for ensuring that any remedial action, required as a result of verification checks, had occasionally not been followed up correctly. This is a small but significant flaw in what is otherwise a good internal verification system.

35. The use of target-setting to maintain and raise standards of performance is insufficient. Targets to improve programme and learners' performance are not set at an operational level. Targets are set for compliance and individual staff have broad performance targets to meet the LSC's requirements. Staff are not set individual targets for

learners' retention, achievement or progression. HTTL analyses data on individual groups but does not use it to set targets to raise standards, although the company does deal with issues and take actions. HTTL does not set targets to improve the performance of learners from minority ethnic groups.

36. The recording and analysis of data at HTTL are inconsistent. Access to reliable data throughout the inspection was difficult. Data systems are set up to meet LSC funding compliance. Requests from the inspection team for data in a different format was problematic. Current systems produce a limited range of reports to support the effective analysis of data. This has not been a problem in the past because of the low numbers of learners. There is little use of data to monitor equality. The company collects recruitment data but does not analyse it. It does not analyse progression, achievement and early leavers by gender, ethnicity, disability or age, to check if particular groups are performing better or worse than others the reasons and why.

37. The self-assessment report is satisfactory. However, the formal updating of the resulting action plan is not. Managers discuss the self-assessment action plan at management meetings, but there has been little formal recording of progress against the required actions.

38. HTTL does not have a formal policy or strategy for literacy and numeracy support but this is not affecting its provision. Staff have clear procedures and guidelines for carrying out initial assessment tests. All learners have an initial assessment and a test to identify their key skills levels. The company provides additional support in small groups and individually on the job with assessors and the support of laptop computers. HTTL refers learners to specialist organisations where there is a perceived problem. However, at present, there is no-one qualified to identify specific learning needs, such as dyslexia. Assessors are working towards literacy, numeracy and language skills qualifications. Managers do not monitor the effect of additional support on retention and achievement.

Leadership and management

Strengths

- effective management of change
- good strategic focus and direction
- strong partnership links
- effective partnership links with minority ethnic groups
- good use of evaluation feedback to improve

Weaknesses

- insufficient target-setting to improve performance
- inconsistent recording and analysis of data
- no formal strategy for literacy, numeracy and language support
- little formal recording of self-assessment action to plan progress

Engineering, technology & manufacturing

Strengths

- good celebration of apprentices' achievements
- good integration of key skills into framework
- particularly effective support in the workplace
- very good learning environment and equipment

Weaknesses

- slow progress on advanced apprenticeship

Retailing, customer service & transportation

Lift-truck awards

Grade 2

Strengths

- good development of work-based skills
- very good practical lift truck training
- very good resources and accommodation for learning
- good pre-course information and advice
- good use of networks and partnerships

Weaknesses

- inadequate recording of individual programmes in SJFT
- insufficient monitoring of courses

WHAT LEARNERS LIKE ABOUT HUDDERSFIELD TEXTILE TRAINING LIMITED:

- the friendly, approachable and knowledgeable staff
- the attention and support from staff
- the opportunity to work at their own pace
- 'being treated with respect'
- the good progression opportunities from the programme
- the improvements in their self-confidence
- 'the course, I would recommend it to others'
- 'the centre, it's brilliant, not like school'

WHAT LEARNERS THINK HUDDERSFIELD TEXTILE TRAINING LIMITED COULD IMPROVE:

- 'the programme - 'it is not challenging enough'
- the level of information - a list of work to complete would be useful
- 'key skills work - it is dull'
- help to understand the wording in the NVQ - it is difficult to understand and repetitive
- the organisation of key skills work - perhaps in a separate folder
- the provision of a separate dining area from conference users

DETAILED INSPECTION FINDINGS

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Grade 3

Strengths

- effective management of change
- good strategic focus and direction
- strong partnership links
- effective partnership links with minority ethnic groups
- good use of evaluation feedback to improve

Weaknesses

- insufficient target-setting to improve performance
- inconsistent recording and analysis of data
- no formal strategy for literacy, numeracy and language support
- little formal recording of self-assessment action to plan progress

39. Over the past few years, HTTL has undergone significant strategic change and development. Following the appointment of a new managing director in April 2002, and a new training manager in 2004, the company has made modifications to strategic and operational planning, including new approaches to marketing, appraisals, staff development, recruitment, job descriptions and contracts of employment. The newly formed senior management team is developing collaborative and inclusive working practices and cultures. HTTL encourages its staff to be responsible and accountable, and they speak positively about the new ways of working. Staff at all levels hold regular team meetings and thoroughly record these with actions and key responsibilities. Contractual agreements with subcontractors are comprehensive and detailed, outlining clearly the training centre's expectations and what they will contribute in return. The company sets clear milestones to monitor targets for learners' achievements and progression. Monthly reports against milestones are reviewed. Support for staff is good. Annual appraisals are thorough and well documented. Performance objectives are set for personal and work-related objectives. HTTL has new strategies that focus on learners' retention, progression and achievement, including the performance improvement group, visual display charts to monitor individual learners' performance, and improved support from assessors.

40. HTTL has good strategic focus and direction. Staff have a clear sense of future direction within the company. Job roles and responsibilities are clear. A key strategic priority in the business plan for this year is improvements in learners' retention, progression and achievements. The workforce development team and the apprenticeship team regularly contribute to the strategic and operational planning through team reviews, which are used to develop key priorities and objectives. All staff have an individual training plan that is closely linked to business performance, the self-assessment process and supporting learners' needs. The board contributes expertise and knowledge to the development of new and existing programmes. It meets three times a year and receives comprehensive reports on learners' progress, new developments, and financial records and forecasting.

The provider has a strong vision for the development of the centre and future programmes to develop the industry and has recently received CoVE status approval for manufacturing textiles. The performance improvement group has been a successful strategy which has focused the board, staff, employers and learners on improving performance. HTTL now has more effective monitoring of the provision, tighter contractual arrangements with subcontractors, increased visits for learners identified at risk, and more effective individual support for learners.

41. Partnership working is a key strategic priority. Seventy textile manufacturing members influence the company through its board of directors. The membership is kept up to date through the annual general meeting, a newsletter, and regular circulars outlining wider funding and training opportunities. Employers value the help HTTL gives to recruit and support apprentices and the wider opportunities for staff development and training with HTTL. For example, access to courses on transferable management skills and links to wider regional and national networks. Learners benefit from the combined expertise of the links and networks that has contributed to the development of the current technical training certificates, the lift truck awards and the development of new programmes and progression routes. Staff represent HTTL at a range of key strategic network meetings and have effective relationships with industry-specialist organisations which have supported the recent development of the CoVE. The centre works collaboratively with a select group of expert local providers to offer specialist programmes that support industry need effectively. The provider has good links with local schools. Staff attend careers fairs and provide work placements for pupils with an interest in the textiles industry. During their placement within the textiles centre, pupils are supported to develop a realistic project to contribute to their final school exams.

42. Management of resources is satisfactory. The finance manager effectively plans, allocates and monitors all budgets in discussion with the senior management team. Budgets are balanced and a small surplus is set aside for growth. Financial reports are prepared for the board three times a year. Operational teams put forward their plans and requirements for programmes and any new developments. Targets are set for contract compliance and budget targets set for income generation.

43. Health and safety is satisfactory. A key person has identified responsibilities. There are clear policies and procedures, which include procedures for accident monitoring and reporting. HTTL appraises potential companies before accepting them for work-based learning programmes. The companies' health and safety teams assess the appraisal forms, identify training needs and offer support as appropriate. Health and safety monitoring is a key part of the progress review meetings.

44. The use of target-setting to maintain and raise standards of performance is insufficient. Targets to improve programme and learner performance are not set at an operational level. Targets are set for compliance and individual staff have broad performance targets to meet the LSC's requirements. Staff are not set individual targets for learners' retention, achievement or progression. HTTL analyses data on individual groups but does not use it to set targets to raise standards, although it does deal with issues and take actions. The company does not set targets to improve the performance of learners from minority ethnic groups. For some staff who have project responsibilities, HTTL sets targets for the issues that they raise. The company consults information relating to regional and national benchmarks, but does not use them to contribute to the setting of specific, measurable,

achievable and realistic targets or to identify new challenging targets. The new agreements with subcontractors have clear targets for learners' achievement.

45. The recording and analysis of data at HTTL is inconsistent. Access to reliable data throughout inspection was difficult. The company has set up data systems to meet LSC funding compliance, but requests from the inspection team for data in a different format was problematic. Current systems produce a limited range of reports to support effective analysis of data. This has not been a problem in the past because of the low numbers of learners. There is little use of data to monitor equality. HTTL collects recruitment data but does not analyse it. It does not analyse progression, achievement and early leavers by gender, ethnicity, disability or age, to check if particular groups are performing better or worse than others and why.

46. HTTL does not have a policy or strategy for literacy, numeracy and language support, but this is not affecting its provision. There are clear procedures for carrying out initial assessment tests with staff guidelines. All learners have an initial assessment and a test to identify their key skills levels. The company provides additional support in small groups and individually on the job with assessors, and the loan of laptop computers. HTTL refers learners to specialist organisations where there is a perceived problem. However, at present, there is no-one qualified to identify specific learning needs, for example dyslexia. Assessors are working towards literacy, numeracy and language skills qualifications. Managers do not monitor the effect of additional support on retention and achievement.

Equality of opportunity

Contributory grade 3

47. HTTL has a clear, up-to-date and comprehensive equal opportunities policy that is reviewed each quarter. It displays a policy statement in the reception areas and learners receive a copy and explanation of its content during their initial course induction. The managing director is responsible for equal opportunities and there is a formal procedure for dealing with any complaints about equality. Employers are required to have their own equal opportunities policy or agree to adopt HTTL's policy. During their quarterly progress reviews, and through six-monthly evaluation questionnaires, the company questions the learners about how they are being treated at work and at their off-the-job training.

48. HTTL has formed effective partnership arrangements with the local Indian and Muslim Welfare Society and the Pakistan Kashmir Welfare Association. They are instrumental in piloting projects to provide suitable IT learning packages for their communities. For example, a commercially available CD-ROM providing basic computer skills with voice-over translations into Urdu, Punjabi, Gujarati and Bangla, is now available as a direct result of these links. Marketing materials for courses in Gujarati and Urdu are particularly aimed at parents of potential learners, to provide them with information about the training and qualifications available.

49. The main training centre has good access and facilities for people with disabilities, and in December 2002 it was awarded third prize in a local disability rights accessible buildings contest. Also, the lift truck centre has access and facilities for people with disabilities. There is only one learner with a declared disability.

50. Key staff have received recent awareness training about equality and diversity, and nine staff have gone on to study learndirect equal opportunity modules. Learners have a satisfactory understanding of their rights and responsibilities in relation to equality issues,

and they are confident about their employers' commitment to equality in the workplace. HTTL has introduced a recent initiative to raise the awareness of learners and employers during the learners' six-monthly progress reviews. It uses a range of questions to prompt discussion during the review about equality and diversity issues. This is intended to provide ongoing guidance and support, and to develop the learners' knowledge and understanding. Until recently, the reinforcement of equality and diversity was only very briefly discussed during the training period, and mainly at the initial induction.

51. There is little use of data to monitor equality. HTTL collects recruitment data but does not routinely analyse it to identify why particular groups of people are failing to be recruited for courses, or to understand the reason for under-representation. The company does not analyse progression, achievement or early leavers by gender, ethnicity, disability or age, to check the relative performance of particular groups and why. HTTL does not analyse the profile of its staff to determine if they reflect the local community in terms of ethnicity, gender, age and disabilities. The company does not check rates of progress and achievement for learners receiving additional support to judge its effectiveness and rarely records minor incidents or the corrective action taken.

Quality improvement

Contributory grade 3

52. The company is accredited with ISO 9001:2000, which is an international quality assurance standard, and regularly has its procedures audited by trained internal and external assessors. A quality assurance manager is responsible for reviewing quality and maintaining the audit schedules. A programme improvement group meets monthly to analyse programme performance data and to suggest improvements or actions to deal with any under-performance issues.

53. There has been good use of evaluation feedback to improve the quality of the services that HTTL offers to learners and employers. Through questionnaires, the company formally seeks learners' feedback comments twice each year and employers' feedback once each year. Significant improvements have been brought about as a direct result of analysing the comments from learners' and employers' questionnaires. Examples of these are a new telephone system to improve external contact for HTTL learners, additional car-parking spaces created for learners and visitors to the centre, air-conditioning in the main conference room at the request of learners, new computers in the IT training rooms, and a new website for better access to information about the company and learners' access to training resources and materials.

54. Formal observation of teaching and learning for HTTL's staff and subcontracted staff has only been operational in the past few months. Before this, it was informally checked by questioning learners at three-monthly progress reviews about their taught courses and by monitoring the success rates of courses. The new system of planned observation, with feedback to tutors to improve their techniques, is satisfactory and is already identifying some possible areas for further development. Observations of learners' progress reviews are also planned to take place.

55. Internal verification is satisfactory. NVQ and key skills courses undergo regular planned internal and external verification to check the quality of the assessments and evidence for the awards. The system for internally verifying NVQ and key skill qualifications is well planned and thorough. However, inspectors did find that the process for ensuring that any remedial action required as a result of verification checks had, occasionally, not

been followed up correctly. This is a small but significant flaw in what is otherwise a good internal verification system.

56. The monitoring of progress is satisfactory. Programme performance monitoring is checked monthly at the performance improvement group meetings. Until recently, the performance data used at these meetings provided retrospective information about issues such as late achievement of full qualifications. The company would then take reactive action to try and recover any late achievements. A new individual learners' progress monitoring system is now operating that shows the percentage of achievement towards full awards. This allows the performance improvement group members to identify any learners who are potentially falling behind with their progress and to recommend corrective actions to try and recover the situation before it becomes more serious.

57. HTTL has formal collaborative arrangements with four other local training organisations. They collaborate to share best practice and design and pilot new systems. Examples of some of these are improved learners' progress review forms, the design of teaching and learning quality monitoring procedures and feedback forms, and improved self-assessment report criteria and writing styles. Also, they have started to compare the way programmes are operated to benchmark themselves against each other for improvement purposes. This provides satisfactory arrangements for the sharing of best practice and quality improvement.

58. The company's self-assessment report is completed annually and takes into account the views of learners, staff, employers, directors, funding bodies and network partner organisations. The company produces an improvement action plan to build on strengths and improve weaknesses. It describes the way programmes, and leadership and management operate and makes judgements about the company's strengths and weaknesses. The company's most recent self-assessment report identified many of the strengths and weaknesses that the inspection found, but it failed to identify some key weaknesses and strengths that were subsequently identified.

59. The self-assessment report is satisfactory. However, the formal updating of the resulting action plan is not. Managers discuss the self-assessment action plan at management meetings, but there has been little formal recording of progress against the required actions. Previously self-assessed improvement actions were not formally put into an action plan format to allow systematic reviews to be carried out and progress against them to be recorded.

AREAS OF LEARNING

Engineering, technology & manufacturing

Grade 3

Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Mechanical engineering Apprenticeships for young people	7	3
Manufacturing Apprenticeships for young people	32	3
Employer training pilot	23	3

60. HTTL has seven learners on advanced apprenticeships who are working towards either mechanical or electrical specialisms in textile engineering. In addition, two learners are working towards the NVQ at level 3 only in engineering and maintenance. Engineering apprentices and the NVQ learners are employed by local textile manufacturing employers. Under a subcontract arrangement, KITS delivers the off-the-job NVQ training. KITS's assessors visit the learners in the workplace every month to carry out NVQ assessments. HTTL's staff carries out the training and assessment of key skills during monthly visits to the workplace, where they complete a form to identify key skills progress and set new short-term targets. Every eight weeks, the HTTL assessor carries out a review of each learners' overall progress on the programme. Learners attend off-the-job background knowledge training at Huddersfield Technical College one day each week.

61. HTTL has 32 learners on the apprenticeship and advanced apprenticeship manufacturing textile programmes. The learners are in full-time employment, with 21 companies spread throughout a large area. Training and assessment of key skills and on-the-job training takes place in the workplace. Assessors visit the workplace once every other week and learners on the advanced apprenticeship attend HTTL's training centre for off-the-job background knowledge training. Currently, 3 per cent of learners are from minority groups and 85 per cent are men. There is one full-time manager who has overall responsibility for the provision with five full-time assessors. In this area there is one subcontractor who is responsible for delivering the technical certificate course for the textile apprenticeship framework.

62. The ETPs in manufacturing textiles are running in six companies and have 23 learners on the course. It is too early for any of the learners to have finished the programme. The learners interviewed were enthusiastic, knowledgeable and are producing good portfolios. The learning is well planned.

Strengths

- good celebration of apprentices' achievements
- good integration of key skills into framework
- particularly effective support in the workplace
- very good learning environment and equipment

Weaknesses

- slow progress on advanced apprenticeship

Achievement and standards

63. HTTL and employers celebrate apprentices' achievements in manufacturing textiles, mechanical engineering and print. The training group invites employers and learners to an annual presentation of certificates. West Yorkshire providers have an apprentice of the month award. A learner from HTTL suggested a better technique for a new fabric to cover bus seats and was awarded a cash prize and a miniature bus seat covered in the fabric. The main centre has large framed photographs and a display of newspaper cuttings. This a strategy the company has implemented to build on and contribute to retention.

64. Retention and achievement on the apprenticeship programme is satisfactory. In 2001-02, 13 per cent of learners successfully completed and 63 per cent were retained. The new senior management team in 2002 initiated a number of strategies to improve provision, better monitoring of learners, increased employer visits and achievement targets for subcontractors. In 2003-04, 71 per cent of learners were retained and 61 per cent completed full frameworks. During 2002-04, there were a number of learner redundancies. For 2004-05, out of 21 starts there are 17 in learning and a maximum of 82 per cent retention and achievement.

65. Learners on the advanced manufacturing textiles programme make slow progress, and achievement in 2001-02 is poor. Retention is poor but improving. Over a three-year period there is a drop in early leavers, moving from 75 per cent in 2001-02 to 44 per cent in 2003-04. There are no early leavers for 2004-05.

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		2000-01							
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number of starts	4		9		6		12		17	100						
Retained*	0		0		0		2		8	47						
Successfully completed	0		0		0		2		7	41						
Still in learning	4		5		2		1		1	6						

*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	21		28		25	100	30	100								
Retained*	0		20		20	80	19	63								
Successfully completed	0		17		17	68	13	43								
Still in learning	17		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

The quality of provision

66. Key skills forms an integral part of the framework. The learning programme is planned so that key skills are interwoven with the technical programme and on- and off-the-job training. HTTL worked effectively with employers to ensure that the technical certificate and key skills content was appropriately work related. Learners are motivated to complete the work and the programme has helped to widen their knowledge of the company they work for, how it is run and how they fit into this structure. Most of the learners are pleased to have the opportunity to learn more IT skills.

67. Learners receive good support during the time they are taking the certificate. The assessors visit every two weeks and arrange this visit with the learner and the company. The appointment helps the production team to manage the production line without the learner. To promote the learners' welfare and to help with the progression of the programme, the assessor and the training supervisor give good advice and guidance. Learners receive feedback at the end of each session. The learner is asked to sign a duplicated document on the feedback and they receive a copy. Reviews are carried out every eight weeks and the assessor, learner and the training supervisor receive a copy of the outcomes of the review. Learners can contact the assessor at any time during the day and are given a contact telephone number. Many of the learners work shifts and the assessor has to travel to their place of work during the evening to carry out reviews and assessments.

68. Learners have very good learning environments and equipment. The main centre has large classrooms and a conference room and industry-standard equipment in the fabric-testing department, cutting room and sewing room. The centre also includes two IT suites. Many of the learners travel long distances to attend the centre and enjoy the ambience. Employers set aside quiet rooms for off-the-job training. The rooms are fit for their intended purpose. Assessors take laptop computers out to the manufacturing companies to enable the learners to complete their IT for key skills. The programmes are effectively managed and planned by the training centre, assessor and the supervisor in the workplace. This arrangement works well and enables the production team to accommodate the learners' absence while on the training programme. The staff are suitably qualified and receive adequate staff training.

69. Teaching and learning are satisfactory on the textile manufacturing course. However, some of the classes observed are tutor-led and rely excessively on handouts.

Leadership and management

70. Huddersfield Technical College regularly observes the off-the-job training courses to check the quality of teaching and learning. NVQ assessment is internally and externally verified and is satisfactory. Managers regularly check that assessment visits and progress reviews are carried out through a performance improvement group that meets monthly to review the performance of all programmes. The performance improvement group also looks at learners' retention and achievement to improve the performance of programmes.

71. Communication with staff is satisfactory, with regular minuted meetings taking place. Equality of opportunity is satisfactory. Learners receive a handbook on equality of opportunity at induction and discuss key definitions. Complaints and harassment are well covered. Learners have insufficient opportunities to reinforce or expand on initial knowledge and understanding through projects or reviews. The company has devised a list for assessors to use in the review process, but it is too early to assess its effect.

72. The learners that the inspectors saw required no additional support needs. Staff have access to guidelines on initial assessment procedures. HTTL identified some of the strengths and weaknesses identified during inspection but failed to identify a key weakness on retention and achievement, identifying this as a strength.

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

Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
<i>Lift-truck awards</i>		2
New Deal 25+ and work-based learning for adults	16	2
Employer training pilot	6	2

73. There are 16 learners on the SJFT course. Between April 2004 and March 2005, 235 learners aged over 25, and 39 learners aged between 18 and 24, joined the programme. The two-week course includes a combination of practical lift truck training and background knowledge, health and safety, emergency first aid, manual handling, fire safety, jobsearch and personal development activities. Jobcentre Plus advisers refer participants and they can join the programme every two weeks. Classroom teaching takes place at the main centre. The practical training is carried out at a separate, specialist lift truck centre close by. The centre carries out driver tests and awards internal certificates to participants who complete day courses. There are two qualified lift truck driving instructors who provide classroom and practical lift truck training and manual handling, and two further tutors provide personal development, jobsearch and IT training. A subcontractor provides health and safety, first aid and fire safety courses.

74. There are six learners on the ETP, known locally as train2gain. Learners are employed by local companies and can join the programme at any time. One learner is working on a learndirect course to improve his skills for life. The workforce development manager manages the train2gain programme. Workplace supervisors employed by host employers provide on-the-job training. HTTL's assessor visits learners at their place of work every two weeks to carry out assessments and reviews. Learners work towards NVQs at level 2 in warehouse and distributive operations.

Lift-truck awards**Grade 2*****Strengths***

- good development of work-based skills
- very good practical lift truck training
- very good resources and accommodation for learning
- good pre-course information and advice
- good use of networks and partnerships

Weaknesses

- inadequate recording of individual programmes in SJFT
- insufficient monitoring of courses

Achievement and standards

75. Learners develop their workplace skills very well. Tutors have expectations of the learners and emphasise achievement and personal success. Eighty-two per cent of learners on SJFT achieve additional qualifications by attending day courses in manual handling, fire safety and first aid. The personal development and jobsearch sessions improve learners'

confidence, self-awareness and motivation to find work. Learners value their new or improving skills and relate this to improved work performance and job security. Learners develop a very good awareness of safe working practice in the home and at work. On the train2gain programme, assessors make good use of everyday workplace tasks during assessment to raise the learners' awareness of personal performance and improving job performance. The ETP NVQ training on the train2gain programme meets the business needs of participating companies.

76. Learners on SJFT courses achieve their lift truck drivers' licence at a satisfactory rate. Between April 2004 and March 2005, 77 per cent of learners aged 18 to 24 and 82 per cent of learners aged 25 and over achieved the licence. Between April 2004 and March 2005, 38 per cent of learners aged between 18 to 24 and 35 per cent of learners aged 25 and over gained employment. This is just below the contractual target agreed with Jobcentre Plus. However, HTTL has recently introduced initiatives to improve job outcomes, such as better monitoring of leavers, improved jobsearch and improved links with employment agencies, but it is too early to see the effect of these.

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

Jobcentre Plus funded programmes																
New Deal 25+ and work-based learning for adults	2004-05															
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number of starts	235															
Retained*	211															
Planned learning completed	172															
Gained job	82															
Still in training	192															

*retained clients are those who have stayed in learning for at least the planned duration of their programme, or have successfully completed their programme within the time allowed, or who have gained employment during their time on the programme

Jobcentre Plus funded programmes																
New Deal for Young People	2004-05															
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number of starts	39															
Retained*	34															
Planned learning completed	28															
Gained job	15															
Still in training	30															

*retained clients are those who have stayed in learning for at least the planned duration of their programme, or have successfully completed their programme within the time allowed, or who have gained employment during their time on the programme

The quality of provision

77. Practical lift truck training is very good. Tutors provide very effective encouragement and support for less able learners. When learners fail to meet the required standard, tutors

discuss clear targets for improvement. They provide extra time for those who require it and arrange additional testing for those who fail at the first attempt. The celebration of learners' success and progress takes place regularly and tutors encourage learners to recognise success in themselves and others. Tutors make very good use of questioning to check understanding and to involve all learners throughout the session. Practical demonstrations are very good. Tutors repeat and reinforce the main learning points and provide a very clear verbal commentary of driving techniques. Tutors provide a good outline of awarding body tests requirements throughout training sessions that helps the learners to understand what is required of them.

78. HTTL has very good resources and accommodation for learning. Training rooms at the main centre are very well furnished to commercial standards and are air-conditioned, well lit and spacious. There is a good range of frequently used training aids and resources, including television and video, flipcharts, an overhead projector, and computer presentation software. There are two well-equipped IT suites and very good welfare and refreshment areas and plenty of parking. Practical facilities at the lift-truck training centre are very good. The centre has recently opened and provides clearly defined indoor and outdoor training areas for reach and counter-balance training, offices, a training room and a refreshment room. There is good accommodation for training at employers' premises for learners on the train2gain programme. Warehouses are tidy and efficient, private rooms are available for review meetings and internet access is provided.

79. HTTL provides good pre-course information and advice. Train2gain information events in employers' premises provide potential learners with a good opportunity to explore the suitability of the course and NVQ requirements. Posters and publicity materials are displayed prominently on company noticeboards. Assessors meet individually with learners to further explain the NVQ before they join the course. Additional information sessions are arranged for learners enrolled on skills for life courses to help them understand the benefits, limitations and keyboard skills required by learndirect. Pre-course information sessions at the training centre are held every two weeks to help learners find out about the SJFT course. Potential learners are introduced to staff, receive a course overview and take part in a centre tour. A learndirect lift truck course has been introduced recently to provide learners with additional information about lift truck driving and the requirements of the background knowledge test. Retention on both programmes is satisfactory.

80. Classroom teaching is satisfactory. In the better sessions, tutors check learners' progress and understanding very well and use effective teaching strategies to engage the their interest. Tutors have a particularly good understanding of the needs of adult learners. However, in the weaker sessions, learning is tutor-led, with insufficient involvement of learners. Some resources are written in unsuitable text and information from the overhead project is difficult to read and of little value. Tutors make insufficient use of the lift-truck handbook to assist learners in class and to extend learning for more able learners.

81. Initial assessment on SJFT is insufficient. Literacy, numeracy and language skills and previous course information are not routinely obtained from Jobcentre Plus to help tutors establish a starting point for each learner. Although information about learners is collected verbally, this is not usually recorded. Individual job goals for learners are insufficiently established. Learning plans contain few targets and are signed by learners before completion. Learners' additional support needs are not recorded or passed to tutors delivering short courses during the day. Learners have a poor understanding of the value

and content of their learning plan. Session plans for classroom sessions do not detail activities to meet the needs of individuals within the group.

Leadership and management

82. Managers and tutors make very good use of well-established networks and partnerships to improve the variety and quality of learning. The basic skills network is used effectively to support assessors working with learners on the train2gain and skills for life courses. For example, assessors contact specialist practitioners directly for guidance and support to supplement the information gathered during network meetings. HTTL has used its established contacts with employers very well to promote the pilot train2gain programme. LSC and Jobcentre Plus meetings provide relevant information for staff and managers that help them understand and deliver the courses. On SJFT, tutors and managers work collaboratively with other training providers to deliver complementary training such as English for speakers of other languages. However, managers have not yet used their networks and partnerships to engage under-represented groups.

83. Written and verbal communication with staff are satisfactory. Tutors feel well supported by managers and by their colleagues. Staff training and development are satisfactory. HTTL encourages tutors to improve their work-related skills to meet their personal interests and business objectives. Learners are informed about HTTL's policies and procedures at induction and are issued with an equal opportunities handbook. However, the content of the handbook is not used sufficiently to improve the learners' understanding of their rights and responsibilities.

84. Internal verification is satisfactory and learners' feedback is collected and evaluated during courses. However, HTTL does not use data sufficiently to plan, monitor and evaluate programmes. For example, it has not carried out any analysis to identify non-participating groups on the train2gain programme.

85. HTTL has recently introduced a process to observe teaching and learning. However, the company has not carried out any observations in this area of learning. Managers have not agreed sufficient targets with staff to bring about improvement in job outcomes, retention and achievement. Self-assessment does not include sufficient evaluative judgements and is not yet seen by staff as a tool to manage improvement. Tutors and assessors have a good commitment to improvement.

