

INSPECTION REPORT

HMP Usk and HMP Prescoed

08 April 2005



ADULT LEARNING
INSPECTORATE

Adult Learning Inspectorate

The Adult Learning Inspectorate (ALI) was established under the provisions of the *Learning and Skills Act 2000* to bring the inspection of all aspects of adult learning and work-based learning within the remit of a single inspectorate. The ALI is responsible for inspecting a wide range of government-funded learning, including:

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

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

Pre-inspection analysis

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

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

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

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

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

Overall effectiveness

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

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

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

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

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

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

Grading

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

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

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INSPECTION REPORT

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROVIDER

1. HMP Usk and HMP Prescoed are two separate prisons, approximately three and a half miles apart, that share a common management. There is also a farm that employs a small number of offenders from HMP Prescoed.
2. HMP Usk, opened in 1844, is situated in Monmouthshire in South Wales. In May 1990, it became an adult category C prison for vulnerable offenders, 95 per cent of whom are sex offenders. It has three residential wings and an additional wing was opened in 2003 for older offenders. It has an operating capacity of 250 and was full at the time of the inspection. The average length of stay is approximately 18 months.
3. The prison's main area of vocational training is construction and has workshops for bricklaying, plastering, a multi-skills workshop and a workshop for handcrafted furniture. Each of these can take up to 20 learners and all provide accredited training. The prison also runs a national vocational qualification (NVQ) in barbering, but there were not enough learners for this area to be inspected. The prison has a charity workshop making concrete garden items such as ornaments and paving slabs. There is some accredited health and safety training provided in this workshop. On one of the residential wings, older offenders carry out other tasks. Seventeen offenders work in the kitchen with five working towards a qualification. Some offenders work in the laundry. Offenders who are wing cleaners receive some health and safety training. The physical education (PE) department provides training in football, basketball and rugby coaching with places for up to 10 learners on each course.
4. HMP Prescoed was opened as a Borstal in 1939. It has had a number of more recent building programmes and in 2002 it became a category D prison for adults. Residential accommodation is in six modern, purpose-built detached residential units, each with 20 rooms. There are no young offenders. It has an operating capacity of 170 with approximately 25 offenders serving life sentences. There are plans to increase this to 40. Approval has recently been given for the prison to accept a small number of offenders from HMP Usk who are nearing the end of their sentence. The average length of stay is approximately three months. A small number of offenders work on the farm. Some receive structured training in land-based skills or are working towards lift-truck qualifications.
5. A significant number of offenders at HMP Prescoed work in the community during the day. It is a two-stage process with those on stage 1 working in voluntary community work and those on stage 2 in paid employment. Offenders work in the kitchens or help clean the prison. Recreational PE is also available. Offenders at HMP Prescoed are able to move freely around the prison between 0700 and 2200 but are confined to their rooms at other times.
6. Education at both prisons is subcontracted to Coleg Gwent, a local college of further education. At HMP Usk there is an education centre with 12 classrooms with 55 places each day. Classes are run every weekday. There is also a small number of evening classes

HMP USK AND HMP PRESCOED

on Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays with two classes running each evening. In the education centre, courses are provided in information and communications technology (ICT), art and crafts and foundation. The college also manages the construction trades training. At HMP Prescoed there is an education centre with two classrooms providing courses in foundation and ICT. Offenders can also take courses in painting, decorating and woodcraft. A small amount of computer-aided design is taught associated with the woodcraft. Classes take place every weekday and some evening classes are also provided. A total of 40 places are available each day in education and work at HMP Prescoed. The two prisons also provide open learning courses leading to a range of general certificates of secondary education (GCSEs), A levels and other qualifications.

7. The head of learning and skills is supported by an administrator and is responsible for managing the contract with the subcontracted college. The learning and skills manager manages the subcontracted provision and is supported by a part-time administrator and two full-time curriculum leaders, one posted at HMP Usk and one at HMP Prescoed. There are 27 hourly paid staff.

8. Both prisons have a library with a range of books, CDs and DVDs. The library service is provided by Monmouthshire Library service. There is a part-time librarian who is supported by five prisoner orderlies.

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS

Grade 2

9. The overall effectiveness of the provision at HMP Usk and HMP Prescoed is good.

Leadership and management, including quality improvement and equality of opportunity, are good. The provision in construction, ICT and foundation programmes is good and is satisfactory in hospitality, sport, leisure and sport.

10. The inspection team was broadly confident in the reliability of the self-assessment process. The prisons are appropriately self critical and accurately identify their strengths and weaknesses in learning and skills. All staff are involved in the self-assessment process on a day-to-day basis. However, the self-assessment report is inaccurate and does not form an effective basis for quality improvement.

11. The provider has demonstrated that it is in a good position to make improvements. The prisons are able to identify weaknesses and rectify them quickly and appropriately. The recent introduction of the learners' quality improvement group ensures that learners' views are fully considered. It is too early to judge the impact of the prisons' use of data to make improvements.

KEY CHALLENGES FOR HMP USK AND HMP PRESCOED:

- establish routine and effective use of data to aid decision-making and improve provision
- fully integrate the production of the self-assessment report into other quality assurance processes
- maintain the strengths identified by inspectors
- fully implement the three-year development plan for learning and skills

- review and improve the PE and sports facilities and the range of courses provided

GRADES

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

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

Construction			2
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade	
Construction crafts		2	
Other government-funded provision	57	2	

Information & communications technology			2
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade	
Using IT		2	
Other government-funded provision	66	2	

Hospitality, sport, leisure & travel			3
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade	
Hospitality and catering		3	
Other government-funded provision	8	3	
Leisure, sport and recreation		3	
Other government-funded provision	11	3	

Foundation programmes			2
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade	
Other contributory areas		2	
Other government-funded provision	80	2	

ABOUT THE INSPECTION

12. The inspection considered and graded the construction, ICT, hospitality, sport, leisure and travel and foundation areas of learning. There were not enough learners on courses in barbering, land-based skills, and lift-truck training for these areas to be inspected. The inspection team also considered how effective the leadership and management is in raising achievements and supporting all learners. Other provision provided by various organisations at the prison was not within the scope of this inspection. The inspection

took place between the 4th and the 8th of April 2005.

Number of inspectors	7
Number of inspection days	28
Number of learners interviewed	113
Number of staff interviewed	80
Number of subcontractors interviewed	15
Number of locations/sites/learning centres visited	2

KEY FINDINGS

Achievements and standards

13. **Learners in both prisons achieve high standards of work.** In foundation programmes, learners produce artwork to a high standard. Other foundation learners produce well-written short stories and some are able to interpret a wide range of information tables and calculate distances and speeds. Construction learners demonstrate good use of hand tools and specialist equipment. ICT learners develop good practical computing skills. PE learners develop good fitness and knowledge. However, hospitality learners make slow progress.

14. The prisons were unable to provide reliable information on the number of starts on a course within any particular year for most areas of learning, and it was not possible for inspectors to assess achievement and retention rates. However, in PE, sport and ICT there is clear evidence of good retention and achievement.

The quality of provision

Grades given to learning sessions

	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Total
Construction	0	5	1	0	6
Foundation programmes	1	7	0	0	8
Information & communications technology	0	3	5	0	8
Total	1	15	6	0	22

15. **The standard of teaching in both prisons is good**, with 75 per cent of all lessons observed by inspectors graded as good or outstanding, and none graded as unsatisfactory. In particular, the teaching of foundation classes was very good, with a good range of effective, innovative teaching methods to meet learners' needs. In construction, there is good practical teaching with well-planned and managed lessons. **However, the teaching of construction-related background knowledge is poor** with insufficient use of appropriate learning materials. Higher-level courses in ICT are taught well. However, there are not enough learning materials for some learners to progress at an adequate pace. **There is good teaching of literacy and numeracy in PE.**

16. **At HMP Prescoed there are insufficient progression routes for learners** and currently no accredited provision is available in this area. For learners who want to

take qualifications not provided by the prisons, well-supported open learning is available. There is an open learning co-ordinator who meets with learners and provides adequate support.

17. Support for learners is generally good. Support is particularly effective for foundation learners. For example, there are eight offenders who work as learner supporters in learning sessions. PE and hospitality learners are appropriately supported by staff and receive good information about the programmes before they start.

Leadership and management

18. Strategic management to improve the provision is good. There is an effective three-year strategic development plan for learning and skills with specific targets. The plan was developed in consultation with staff, offenders and the college of further education.

19. The prison has very productive working relationships with a number of organisations. Prison staff work particularly well with staff from the college of further education. For example, the prisons' quality improvement group includes two of the college's senior managers. Working relationships with other higher education providers are also very good.

20. Data is not used effectively to implement improvement. There is a database to record information about learners, but the data it currently holds is inaccurate.

21. The promotion of equality of opportunity is good. At induction, learners are given the relevant policies, and discuss relevant issues and their rights and responsibilities. This knowledge is reinforced through a questionnaire at the end of the induction and by tutors throughout the courses.

22. Access to some parts of the prison is poor for learners with restricted mobility, including the library and some parts of the education centre at HMP Usk. However, the prison ensures that the provision is available at other locations and library orderlies take the books to those learners who are unable to access the library.

23. There is insufficient reference to equality of opportunity in the self-assessment report. There is not enough detail on how equality of opportunity is managed or on the effectiveness of policies. There is not enough data to analyse the participation and performance of learners from different groups.

24. Quality improvement is good. The good range of effective quality assurance arrangements includes an established system of lesson observations. Weaknesses identified are dealt with quickly and effectively.

25. The self-assessment report is inaccurate. Many of the strengths in the report are no more than normal practice and the report does not identify many of the strengths and weaknesses found by inspectors.

Leadership and management

Strengths

- good strategic management to improve the provision
- very productive working relationships with partners
- good attention to equality of opportunity at induction
- good working relationships between learners and staff
- particularly effective involvement of learners in quality improvement
- good range of effective quality assurance arrangements
- very good work by the prisons to rectify identified weaknesses

Weaknesses

- ineffective use of data to implement improvements
- insufficient reference to equality of opportunity in self-assessment
- inaccurate self-assessment report

Construction

Construction crafts

Grade 2

Strengths

- very good development of skills
- good practical training
- very effective monitoring of learners' progress
- good resources

Weaknesses

- poor planning of background knowledge classes
- inadequate use of personal protective equipment by learners

Information & communications technology

Using IT

Grade 2

Strengths

- good development of practical computing skills
- very good monitoring and recording of learners' progress
- wide range of courses at all levels

Weaknesses

- too much use of paper-based resources
- insufficient practice material to meet individual learners' needs

Hospitality, sport, leisure & travel

Strengths

- good retention and achievement rates on most courses
- good development of learners' fitness and background knowledge
- very good monitoring and recording of learners' progress
- good teaching of literacy and numeracy in PE

Weaknesses

- poor facilities and resources for PE
- insufficient links with external organisations in PE
- insufficient progression routes for learners
- slow progress of NVQ hospitality learners

Foundation programmes

Strengths

- good development of knowledge and skills
- very good teaching
- particularly effective learning support

Weaknesses

- insufficient teaching of life skills
- some poor resources

WHAT LEARNERS LIKE ABOUT HMP USK AND HMP PRESCOED:

- good individual support from tutors and staff
- 'we're all treated equally'
- the relevance of the construction courses to industry
- 'the management listens to us'
- 'being able to read letters from home and send letters back'

WHAT LEARNERS THINK HMP USK AND HMP PRESCOED COULD IMPROVE:

- the size of classes for some courses
- the number of evening classes
- the variety in teaching style in ICT classes
- the facilities and equipment in PE

DETAILED INSPECTION FINDINGS

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Grade 2

Strengths

- good strategic management to improve the provision
- very productive working relationships with partners
- good attention to equality of opportunity at induction
- good working relationships between learners and staff
- particularly effective involvement of learners in quality improvement
- good range of effective quality assurance arrangements
- very good work by the prisons to rectify identified weaknesses

Weaknesses

- ineffective use of data to implement improvements
- insufficient reference to equality of opportunity in self-assessment
- inaccurate self-assessment report

26. Strategic management of education and training is good. The head of learning and skills has written a three-year development plan for education and training with clear strategic aims. These can be linked to the prisons' broader strategic objectives outlined in the service level agreement. The development plan was written after effective consultation with all relevant parties, including prison staff and the staff from the college of further education who work at the prison. The process also included some discussion with current learners and offenders who were not currently involved with education and training. The plan clearly identifies how the provision will meet offenders' needs and career aims. Clear targets are set to monitor the implementation of the plan. For example, the plan was written one year before the inspection and all targets for that year have been met. All relevant staff fully understand and support the plan. The head of learning and skills is fully supported by all staff from the prison and the college of further education who are involved in education and training.

27. The prisons' learning and skills staff have developed very productive working relationships with a number of organisations to ensure that the provision is monitored effectively and that opportunities for offenders to engage in education are improved. Staff from the prisons and the college of further education work well together. The head of learning and skills and the learning and skills manager meet each day to discuss operational issues relating to learning and skills in the two prisons, as well as aspects of learning and skills not provided by the college. Two of the college's senior management team are members of the prisons' quality improvement group which provides wider information about education and training. They help the prisons identify appropriate vocational qualifications in, for example, horticulture. The college also helped in setting up the construction workshop. The college has run a number of courses for prison staff free of charge. A member of the college's staff is a curriculum team leader at one prison and assistant race relations officer. The learning and skills manager also works in the offending behaviour unit facilitating on the sex offender treatment programme. The head of learning

and skills conducts an annual performance appraisal of the learning and skills manager. The college plans to continue its working relationship with the prison when the contract comes to an end in August 2005. Staff from the library attend prison staff development sessions on issues such as equality of opportunity.

28. The prison has developed good working relationships with providers of higher education to help learners progress beyond the courses it provides. A university provides access to higher education courses, providing a tutor for two hours each week to teach at the prison. A tutor from another university visits on a monthly basis to provide additional support for those offenders working towards its distance learning degrees. There are also very good working relationships with an organisation that provides monthly courses at each prison on self-employment and running a small business. The prisons work effectively with an organisation that meets with those offenders close to release to discuss their ideas on starting a small business after release. The local authority works with the prison to teach language courses and a course on language and play for fathers.

29. The prisons do not use data effectively to help with management decisions and implement improvements. Data relating to retention and achievement is currently being recorded, but some staff do not know how the information should be collected. Some of the data is not accurate. Data on the number of learners who have left courses or who have achieved a qualification is collected by staff, but they do not receive regular reports about the current retention or achievement rates.

Equality of opportunity

Contributory grade 2

30. Good attention is given to equality of opportunity at induction. The prisons have an equal opportunities policy which is appropriate and applied equally at both prisons. The college also has its own policy. These policies are given to learners during their course or work area induction. This induction includes a detailed explanation of equality of opportunity, learners' rights and responsibilities, and the complaints procedures. At the end of induction, learners complete a useful questionnaire to test their knowledge of equality of opportunity. Learners have a good understanding of equality of opportunity and their knowledge is reinforced effectively by tutors throughout their course. Staff involved in education and training fully understand and support the policies.

31. There is a high degree of respect between learners and between learners and staff. Learners are addressed by staff with respect and the relationship is friendly and professional. Staff fully understand the needs of the different learner groups on their courses. For example, in a cookery class, when learners asked about the use of vegetable-based suet, the tutor explained that some members of the class could not touch certain animal products because of their beliefs. Tutors provide good support in lessons for learners with poor literacy and numeracy skills and those who speak English as an additional language. For example, at HMP Usk, a group consisting of two members of staff and two learners has been established to produce signs and instructions for those learners who have poor literacy skills or who speak English as an additional language. Additional formal support is also available.

32. Access to education and training is available to all offenders and is promoted well throughout the prisons. The rate of participation in education and training is high, with over 75 per cent of offenders attending some form of education or vocational training. There is adequate access for people with restricted mobility, in most areas. However, access to the

education department is poor. It is on the second floor and can only be accessed by stairs. There are good arrangements to give learners access to education in other locations. For example, one learner who finds climbing stairs difficult, accesses his education course in a classroom in one of the ground-floor workshops. Access to the library is also poor for those with restricted mobility, but library orderlies will take the library catalogue to offenders who are unable to go to the library themselves and deliver requested books. One member of staff is responsible for providing elderly offenders with access to education on their wings.

33. Insufficient reference is made in the self-assessment report to equality of opportunity. There is not enough detail on how equality of opportunity is managed or on learners' experience. The prisons do not have sufficient data to analyse the participation and performance of learners from different groups. Data is now being collected, but this has not yet been analysed.

34. Management of equal opportunities is effective. However, there are not enough action plans relating to the implementation of the equal opportunities policy. Staff have recently attended training on equal opportunities and diversity.

Quality improvement

Contributory grade 2

35. There is particularly effective involvement of learners in quality improvement. Learners complete a satisfaction survey every three months and these are analysed and discussed by staff. Appropriate responses are agreed and written action plans are developed. These surveys are also used to identify judgements in the self-assessment report. The prisons have introduced an effective quality improvement group for learners, which involves them in the monitoring and development of education and training. Learners representing each area of learning meet every fortnight to discuss a wide range of relevant issues. In the relatively short time this group has been in place, a significant number of improvements have been identified and actioned. For example, staff must ensure that windows open in all classes and that the repair and replacement of woodwork machinery is carried out promptly. There are arrangements for continued supervision of learners' during tutors' absence.

36. The prisons operate a good range of effective quality assurance arrangements. These include an established system of lesson observations, the effective internal verification of assessments, learner surveys, the learner quality improvement groups, and many other informal processes. Regular meetings of staff and teaching teams identify areas for improvement and these are promptly actioned. The prison has carried out lesson observations for many years and the current system ensures that all tutors are observed annually. Some observations are peer to peer and identify development actions for staff. Other observations are carried out by managers, and some by external observers, and these provide a clear evaluation of the lesson and an associated grade. The grades given by inspectors match those awarded by the prisons' own observations. Internal verification is effective in assuring the quality of assessments in all areas and this is supported by good external verification reports. The prisons use a common system of internal verification for all courses based on the subcontracted college's approach. However, the system is not yet fully established. There are insufficient observations of assessor performance and no standardisation meetings.

37. Managers have written a quality assurance policy and associated procedures. These form a quality assurance manual that has recently been issued as a controlled document. This manual brings together all associated quality assurance processes. However, it is too

early to judge its effectiveness.

38. The prisons work well to rectify identified weaknesses. The prisons have carried out annual self-assessment over a significant period of time. The process of self-assessment is effective in bringing about improvement. Staff continually self-evaluate and respond to identified weaknesses. They are fully involved in the self-assessment process and produce self-assessment reports for their courses. Where issues are identified, staff agree actions to rectify them.

39. The self-assessment report is inaccurate. The latest report is not sufficiently self-critical and is inaccurate. Inspectors found many of the strengths to be no more than normal practice and identified additional strengths and weaknesses. However, the grades in the report matched many of those given by inspectors. The self-assessment report does not make adequate reference to performance data or lesson observations.

AREAS OF LEARNING

Construction

Grade 2

Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Construction crafts		2
Other government-funded provision	57	2

40. Most construction training takes place in HMP Usk, with some painting and decorating and handcrafted woodcraft at HMP Prescoed. At the time of inspection, there were 13 learners in woodcraft, 14 in brickwork, 14 in plastering, three in painting and decorating and 13 in construction multi skills. Learners in both prisons attend construction training for five full days a week for practical activities and are working towards an accredited construction qualification. There are five full-time members of staff who are vocationally experienced and qualified. All are qualified teachers, instructors and assessors. Additional instructors are employed by the college. Learners are recruited onto construction programmes after an initial assessment by the education department. Induction is carried out in the vocational area when details of the training programme are explained. Learners generally spend up to nine months in training. Some learners remain on programme for longer and progress to more advanced qualifications.

Construction crafts

Grade 2

Strengths

- very good development of skills
- good practical training
- very effective monitoring of learners' progress
- good resources

Weaknesses

- poor planning of background knowledge classes
- inadequate use of personal protective equipment by learners

Achievement and standards

41. Learners develop very good practical skills at both prisons. Learners work well at their own pace on individual tasks and projects. They demonstrate good use of hand tools and specialist equipment and produce a very high standard of work products. Very effective skills are used by learners in the design and construction of projects. For example, one woodcraft learner at HMP Usk used computer-aided design skills to make a rocking horse. This has then been manufactured using traditional carving and wood construction crafts to a commercial standard. A learner at HMP Usk designed and constructed an ornamental barbecue grill, which included the design and fabrication of specific concrete slabs. After only five weeks on programme a learner at HMP Prescoed has designed and made a set of ornate drawers and a stool to a very high commercial standard. Learners at both prisons progress well and are on target to achieve in their planned time. Portfolios are well

constructed and presented, with good diverse evidence effectively cross-referenced to the programme units.

42. Achievement and retention data has not been systematically collected and analysed. Data is only available for one year and does not refer to specific learner groups.

The quality of provision

43. Practical training and instruction is good at both prisons. Of the practical sessions observed, 83 per cent were graded good or better and none were unsatisfactory. Practical sessions are planned effectively and well managed. Effective teaching is provided by appropriately qualified and experienced staff who use good instructional and demonstration techniques. The training programmes are well developed with good training material to help learners complete set tasks. Individual instruction is given in a good training environment. Learners have very good working relationships with instructors and are enthusiastic and highly motivated. Learning is regularly monitored through individual questioning of learners and the assessment of completed tasks.

44. Monitoring of learners' progress is very effective. Learners complete an initial assessment of their prior knowledge of construction. Effective short-term targets are set on entry to a construction training programme. Once on programme, an individual learning plan specific to the construction section is compiled for each learner. Very effective action plans are completed and realistic and achievable targets are set. Weekly log sheets are completed detailing learners' short-term progress. Monthly progress reviews are also carried out to monitor effectively their progress over a longer timescale. Good constructive feedback on their individual performance and progress is given to each learner. All achievement and assessment decisions are recorded very effectively. Tutors and learners each have a copy and are able to identify at any time what has been achieved and what needs to be achieved.

45. Resources in construction are good at both prisons. There are sufficient well-qualified staff who have a wide range of relevant vocational experience. Most have teacher or instructor qualifications and all are qualified assessors. There are sufficient numbers of internal verifiers to meet the needs of the awarding bodies. Practical workshops at both prisons are well resourced with hand tools and appropriate specialist equipment. Consumable materials are in good supply and learners do not have to wait to use tools and equipment. Learners have access to a wide range of learning materials and dedicated training aids. Course paperwork to support the training sessions is very good.

46. Assessment practice and procedures are satisfactory. Assessment is fair, accurate and planned. It is carried out in a formative manner and is recorded well. Internal verification is also satisfactory. However, not enough written feedback is given to assessors on their performance. Assessment and verification sheets are detailed and comprehensive.

47. Learner support is satisfactory. Tutors give effective pastoral support to learners and provide an effective introduction and induction to the construction programmes. There is good support for training. Equal opportunities and health and safety induction are promoted well at both prisons. In the induction period and in the practical sessions, individual learning needs are identified and appropriate support provided by specialist tutors.

48. Planning of background knowledge classes is poor at both prisons. Provision is not planned or structured adequately to cover the required background knowledge in the vocational programmes in the construction department. Learners spend most their time in practical workshops developing and practising their practical skills. Background knowledge is taught on an individual basis if and when it is required. This often has to be repeated and not enough use is made of good learning materials or appropriate ICT resources. The provider has identified this weakness and has provided a purpose-built classroom resourced with appropriate ICT facilities for the teaching of background knowledge. It is too early to judge the effectiveness of this development.

Leadership and management

49. The programme is managed satisfactorily by a curriculum manager who reports directly to the education manager and leads the construction team. All staff fully understand their roles and responsibilities and there are regular team meetings to review progress and plan developments. Quality assurance arrangements are effective, with frequent reviews of learners' progress. All staff have been observed in practical workshops by an external agency. Staff are beginning to use management information to analyse retention and achievement rates to aid planning and improvement. This is relatively new and it is too early to judge its effectiveness.

50. All staff were involved in the compilation of the self-assessment report. However, the report is not sufficiently self-critical and judgemental. A number of additional strengths and weaknesses were identified by inspectors. The strengths and weaknesses in the report were found to be no more than normal practice. Some informal assessment takes place and internal verification is satisfactory.

51. There is inadequate use of personal protective equipment by learners in some practical areas. Where protective overalls are required, many learners do not wear them properly and are a safety hazard where learners are using, for example, rotating machinery. At HMP Prescoed one learner was not wearing a dust mask while working with a small band saw.

Information & communications technology**Grade 2**

Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
<i>Using IT</i>		2
Other government-funded provision	66	2

52. Currently, 42 learners are enrolled on the ICT courses running at HMP Usk for three days a week. Of these, 28 are taking entry level and level 1 qualifications and are also on the foundation programme. The other 14 learners are enrolled on various other courses at different levels covering computer programming, databases, spreadsheets and advanced word-processing. Training is provided in a large dedicated computer room and in two smaller fully equipped rooms. There are 24 learners enrolled at HMP Prescoed. Four of these are taking computer-aided design qualifications at levels 2 and 3 and are based in the woodworking department. Twenty learners are enrolled on a programme that provides training from entry level to level 2, covering all popular business programmes. Training is provided for five days a week in a dedicated computer suite. Learners can use the computers in the evenings for three nights a week. Currently, two programme managers oversee the running of the courses and support the seven tutors who provide the training at the two sites.

Using IT**Grade 2***Strengths*

- good development of practical computing skills
- very good monitoring and recording of learners' progress
- wide range of courses at all levels

Weaknesses

- too much use of paper-based resources
- insufficient practice material to meet individual learners' needs

Achievement and standards

53. Learners at both prisons develop good computing skills. Many start their courses with no computer experience and finish having achieved level 2. Some learners achieve level 3. All learners gain more than one qualification and some use ICT as part of their programme to improve their literacy and numeracy skills. Good practical skills are developed from the beginning of training and are reinforced throughout the programme. Learners' work is of a good standard, and on the higher-level courses some is of a very high standard. Some learners are gaining their qualifications particularly quickly. The prison was unable to provide reliable information about the number of starts in a year. However, monthly data recorded by staff shows that retention and achievement are good. Learners gain good self-confidence and many intend to use their skills in employment.

The quality of provision

54. Monitoring and recording of learners' progress is very good. There are standard recording procedures across both prisons. Following the initial assessment, learners have an entry interview during which an action plan is produced. From this, detailed development and achievement logs are kept. All paperwork is completed promptly and contains relevant information that allows staff to monitor learners' progress, areas of concern and future actions. Each month the learner and tutor complete a learner progress record. All paperwork is clearly linked and provides management with detailed learner information. Staff use the records to plan the use of resources, and to timetable assessment and verification duties. Assessment and verification is carried out correctly following awarding body requirements.

55. Learners have access to a wide range of courses available at all levels. Many start at entry level, completing units covering word-processing, database, spreadsheets and desktop publishing. They then can then build on these skills at levels 1 and 2, and broaden them with presentation graphics and computer art. Some move on to these subjects at level 3, while others complete integrated qualifications. All courses are accredited. Some areas normally covered in ICT cannot be provided for learners due to restrictions in using the internet and e-mailing. This is particularly applicable to HMP Usk.

56. Teaching is generally satisfactory. Higher-level courses are taught well and tutors use a wide range of teaching methods. Classes are organised well and learners work well with the tutors and each other. Tutors produce some good relevant material for classes. Work is marked promptly and usually contains helpful comments.

57. Guidance and support for learners are provided on a weekly basis. An adult guidance adviser from the careers service visits HMP Prescoed each week. Learners are able to make appointments to get impartial advice or practical help with curriculum vitae preparation, interview skills or information about additional training. Induction is thorough and is carried out at the start of training. Learners receive a detailed information pack. All learners who require additional support for literacy, numeracy or communication receive this on a regular, planned basis. Some learners are completing ICT units as part of their foundation course. Some progress to specific ICT courses, but receive ongoing help and support with any identified needs.

58. There is too much use of paper-based resources on some courses. Many of the training sessions are run as workshops, with learners working on different software programmes, and at different levels. Tutors rely mainly on workbooks with learners moving from one exercise to the next and some individual support from the tutor. There are not enough structured sessions organised for these groups to explain and demonstrate common features or for other learners to use the sessions for consolidation or revision. No overview of the course requirements is discussed. There is not enough group work during workshops. However, on the higher-level courses, there is more teaching of background knowledge and good use of group work to better involve learners in their training.

59. There is insufficient practice material to meet the individual needs of some learners, although two of the tutors do have specific qualifications for the help and support of learners with literacy needs. Not enough differentiated material is available for learners with individual needs. Many workbooks, exercise materials and information sheets are not

adjusted through the use of additional illustrations or plainer language for learners who find reading or spelling difficult. There is not enough material to challenge more able learners. Learners with specific disabilities such as impaired sight or hearing do not have adequate access to workbooks and learning materials in more appropriate formats. Not enough use is made of voice recognition and speaking programmes.

Leadership and management

60. The programme is managed effectively with regular team meetings taking place within the curriculum area as well as with other subject areas. Staff work towards achievement and retention targets and receive training to keep them up to date with new developments. Courses are updated and new courses developed. Teaching resources are shared between the prisons. If new equipment is needed, it is purchased promptly. Recently, new interactive white boards have been installed in classrooms and are now being used effectively. Staff are suitably qualified and in some cases have a wide range of computing experience. Learners regularly complete feedback questionnaires which are used to improve the programme and tackle learners' concerns.

61. Equality of opportunity issues are reinforced effectively during training. Health and safety is covered well in the information provided at induction and in working practice. Members of the teaching staff have good working relationships with learners.

62. The self-assessment report does not accurately reflect the finding of the inspectors. It is not sufficiently critical, but the action plan does partially deal with one of the weaknesses identified. Staff have a satisfactory understanding of the main issues in this area of learning.

Hospitality, sport, leisure & travel**Grade 3**

Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
<i>Hospitality and catering</i> Other government-funded provision	8	3
<i>Leisure, sport and recreation</i> Other government-funded provision	11	3

63. There are currently 19 learners on sport and fitness courses at HMP Usk. Of these, eight learners are working towards Open College Network (OCN) awards at level 2 in health, fitness, agility and speed. The course runs for three mornings each week for three weeks. Five learners are awaiting places on the next course. Literacy and numeracy skills have been matched to a discrete OCN award from the portfolios of learners working towards level 1 sport awards. Eleven learners are currently following hospitality courses, of whom six are working towards an NVQ at level 1 in food preparation and cookery and five are working towards external awards in food hygiene and health and safety in the workplace. These courses are subcontracted to the college of further education. HMP Usk has an activity area for sports, fitness and weight training activities, including a mix of free weights and resistance machines. HMP Prescoed has a gym and sports hall. An outdoor tarmac area is also used for sport and fitness activities at both prisons. Recreational PE is structured to provide access to all learners throughout the week, including weekends and evenings. There are three PE officers and one senior officer who cover both prisons. Four prison orderlies assist in the cleaning and maintenance of the sports facilities across the two establishments. The PE department also provides a range of recreational activities to promote health and personal fitness including badminton, fitness and weight training, football and team building activities. Football training is provided at HMP Prescoed for a team playing in a local league. At HMP Usk, courses in healthy living, walking back to health, over 50s fitness and indoor bowls are also provided.

Strengths

- good retention and achievement rates on most courses
- good development of learners' fitness and background knowledge
- very good monitoring and recording of learners' progress
- good teaching of literacy and numeracy in PE

Weaknesses

- poor facilities and resources for PE
- insufficient links with external organisations in PE
- insufficient progression routes for learners
- slow progress of NVQ hospitality learners

Achievement and standards

64. Pass rates are good on the recently introduced OCN awards in sport and fitness. The retention and achievement rates for level 1 and level 2 awards currently stand at 99 per cent and 92 per cent respectively. Similarly, in hospitality, the retention and achievement

rates for foundation food hygiene are 96 per cent, and for health and safety in the workplace are 94 per cent. Although retention on the NVQ at level 1 food preparation and cooking is satisfactory at 83 per cent, achievement is poor at 33 per cent.

65. Learners at both prisons develop both good background knowledge and personal fitness levels. On the OCN level 2 health, fitness, agility and speed course, learners make good progress in their background knowledge and practical work, and respond well to questioning. They demonstrate good use and understanding of technical terminology and can relate coursework to diet and healthy living. Learners work well together and develop good team working skills. Learners working towards NVQ at level 1 in food preparation and cookery complete a full working week in the kitchens. They work to deadlines and prepare a variety of meals to serve to the prison population. Attendance and punctuality is good.

66. Progress is slow for learners working towards hospitality NVQs. There are insufficient work-based assessors for the hospitality course. Not enough assessment takes place of learners' progress and skills.

The quality of provision

67. Monitoring and recording of learners' progress is good at both prisons. In PE, learners complete appropriate individual learning plans. There is good planning and recording of assessment and work is marked with appropriate feedback. PE staff have developed appropriate learning activities. Learners are provided with clear, well-illustrated worksheets. Their portfolios of evidence are well referenced and laid out. In hospitality, learners develop detailed portfolios of evidence. Internal verification is thorough.

68. Teaching of literacy and numeracy is good in PE. Learners use evidence for their OCN level 1 awards in basic football, rugby and basketball skills for a separate award in literacy and numeracy. This process was developed in partnership between the PE and the literacy and numeracy staff. The PE department is now solely responsible, with a member of staff possessing a relevant qualification for the teaching of literacy and numeracy. This process is planned to be extended to OCN level 2 awards.

69. Learner guidance and support is satisfactory. Courses are widely advertised on noticeboards on all wings and outside the gym at HMP Usk. Most learners are recruited onto PE courses through gym inductions, recreational PE sessions or through discussion with other learners. Offenders working in the kitchens can work towards relevant hospitality courses. Tutors and assessors develop good working relationships with learners.

70. There are insufficient progression routes for learners. Although PE learners can progress from an OCN level 1 to level 2 award, no further progression is available. There are insufficient courses to provide the vocational skills required by sport and recreation employers. At the time of inspection, no accredited sports courses were available at HMP Prescoed. The PE department has identified this weakness and has well-developed plans to provide accredited fitness-related courses to help learners gain jobs in the health and fitness industry. Hospitality learners who have achieved NVQ at level 1 in food preparation and cookery cannot progress to level 2. The provision of food to the prisons does not allow for full achievement of the required range of skills, particularly in relation to the preparation of meat and fish.

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71. The PE department has insufficient links with external organisations, a weakness identified in the self-assessment report. Learners are not able to work with people other than offenders. For example, learners cannot work with groups who have specific individual learning and/or other needs. This is particularly relevant for learners at HMP Prescoed who have fewer restrictions concerning employment after release. Learners are not able to develop self-confidence and inter-personal skills through working with outside groups. There are no links with relevant commercial organisations to help learners gain jobs after release.

Leadership and management

72. Leadership and management in PE are satisfactory. PE staff are well managed and fully understand the aims and objectives of the department. The self-assessment report for PE and hospitality is adequately detailed and identifies many of the strengths and weaknesses found by inspectors. The action plan provides an appropriate basis for future progress. There is appropriate attention to equality of opportunity. All staff and learners work well together. At HMP Usk, the PE staff have developed an extensive range of recreational activities for older offenders, particularly those undergoing rehabilitation after illness. These include bowls and gym sessions for the over 50s and walking back to health classes as part of a healthy living initiative. However, the current gym at HMP Usk is not fully accessible to learners with restricted mobility. The quality assurance systems adequately monitor and record learners' progress. Minuted staff meetings are held, but actions are not formally agreed, or responsibility allocated. Observations of teaching and learning have recently been introduced, but a subject specialist does not carry these out. Course evaluation forms are completed, but these are not yet analysed to help improve the quality of education and training.

73. Facilities and equipment for PE are poor at both prisons. The small gymnasium at HMP Usk is also used as a general sports area. Heavy equipment has to be regularly moved in and out of small storage facilities. Resistance equipment at both prisons largely consists of free weights and is not of an appropriate industry standard to provide accredited fitness courses. The outside areas used for a range of sport and fitness activities are neither safe nor appropriate. For example, an accident occurred during a sprint session observed during inspection. At HMP Prescoed the gymnasium is adequate, but does not reflect current industry standards. The sports hall is inadequate and cannot accommodate sports activities for large groups of learners. The outside area used for sport and fitness activities is not appropriate. However, there are two satisfactory football pitches. There is a large amount of outdoor pursuits equipment stored at HMP Prescoed, but this is not often used and is poorly maintained.

74. PE staff are suitably qualified in a range of sports, fitness and outdoor pursuits qualifications and two have achieved their trainer/assessor awards. Staff in hospitality are also appropriately qualified, but none of the kitchen staff have assessor qualifications.

Foundation programmes**Grade 2**

Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Other contributory areas Other government-funded provision	80	2

75. At HMP Usk there are 53 learners on foundation programmes, some of whom are also working towards ICT qualifications. Twenty-eight learners are on full-time literacy and numeracy courses with additional classes in art, craft and cookery. A further 11 learners are on part-time literacy and numeracy courses and four learners receive instruction in their cells. A peripatetic tutor visits seven learners in the workshops and three learners are on a part-time English for speakers of other languages course. There are 27 learners at HMP Prescoed of whom six are on a full-time literacy and numeracy course, 14 learners are taking a part-time literacy course and a further seven learners are on a part-time numeracy course. In both prisons, most teaching takes place in the education centres. There is one full-time staff member at HMP Usk, with eight hourly paid sessional tutors, and one full-time staff member at HMP Prescoed, with three hourly paid sessional tutors. All teaching is subcontracted to the college of further education. There are no waiting lists for courses at either prison.

Strengths

- good development of knowledge and skills
- very good teaching
- particularly effective learning support

Weaknesses

- insufficient teaching of life skills
- some poor resources

Achievement and standards

76. Learners develop good knowledge and skills. Their work is of a high standard and includes drawings, paintings and models. Learners with poor drawing skills learn to design and make cards and gifts to a high standard. Tutors work well to ensure that the activities are also used to help combat stress. Other learners are composing very well-written short stories. Some learners are now proficient in family and business correspondence as well as form filling. In numeracy groups, learners interpret a wide variety of information tables and calculate distances and speeds. Some learners are also achieving national awards in oral story telling, writing drama and art. In art and crafts, the portfolios of work demonstrate clearly the range of skills developed by learners during their course. However, some learners do not progress beyond basic skills. Most learners achieve good self-esteem and self-confidence.

77. Data is only available for 2004-05. Retention rates range from 60 to 100 per cent with most courses averaging around 80 per cent and above. The achievement figures range from 58 to 100 per cent with most courses being over 70 per cent.

The quality of provision

78. Teaching is very good at both prisons with all observed sessions graded at good or outstanding. Lessons are well prepared in particular detail and there is accurate and detailed recording of learners' aims and achievements. Initial assessment is thorough and well recorded and used to produce individual learning plans that enable detailed differentiation to take place. Induction into education is very thorough. Individual learning plans identify learning goals, targets set, and the action required, with appropriate timescales. The tutor and learner review this plan each month. Monitoring and recording of individual learners' progress is good. At the end of each session, the tutor records the progress made by each learner and uses the records to ensure individual learners' needs are met.

79. A range of effective, innovative teaching styles is used to meet individual learners' needs. For example, tutors make good use of puppets and music during a film-making session. Literacy and numeracy games are used well to help learners progress. Classes are fun, creative and productive. Learners work well together with good use of discussion and group work by tutors. There is good individual coaching and all learners work at an appropriate pace on learning materials that meet their individual learning needs. In some classes, very effective use is made of electronic activity boards. The art tutor ensures that each learner is working on an art topic of specific personal interest and that literacy skills are linked well to the art work where appropriate. In art and crafts, learners of mixed ability work well together in the same group on projects such as still life drawing. Other learners work on their own project at their own pace.

80. Learning support is particularly effective. The tutors develop very good working relationships with their learners. There are eight offenders working as learner supporters at HMP Usk who help out in classrooms by providing additional individual support and private tuition. They work under the direction of tutors and provide specified assistance, linking in with classroom studies. Three other offenders have been trained to help with reading skills. Currently, 13 learners on education programmes and a further eight offenders are receiving this help. When learners complete their course, they are encouraged to stay on programme and are helped to read books of their choice and use the library. Many learners have developed good reading skills through this process. Full and detailed records are kept of the support provided. A library reading group was started in July 2004 following a suggestion by an offender. This group meets weekly and, to date, 12 books have been read and discussed. All learners have access to well-planned and conducted learning tutorials each month to review their progress and identify problems.

81. A peripatetic tutor has been recruited to teach literacy and numeracy to learners at the farm and the workshops in both prisons. The tutor works well to ensure that learners understand numeracy in a vocational setting. Learners fully understand the importance of the additional skills they need to gain, to establish themselves as self-employed on release. Some learners attend the classes on a part-time basis.

82. There is insufficient teaching of life skills. At HMP Usk, learners are allotted four and three-quarter hours for life skills in addition to cookery, art and craft sessions. At HMP Prescoed only three hours each week are timetabled for life skills with no additional cookery art or craft sessions. The life skills syllabus is very extensive and includes budgeting, behaviours, citizenship, cookery, healthy living, and drugs and alcohol

awareness. However, these subjects are not taught in sufficient depth. Tutors do not work effectively to ensure that the life skills syllabus is taught as an integral part of the literacy and numeracy classes.

Leadership and management

83. The management of the literacy and numeracy programmes is good in both prisons. Staff are appropriately qualified and experienced. The library is well stocked and has an appropriate selection of books to meet learners' literacy needs. However, some resources are poor. Interactive white boards have been provided in both prisons but there is not enough use of information learning technology in other learning sessions. This issue has been identified and new laptop computers have been purchased. At HMP Usk, the classrooms, though well maintained, are not adequate for the size of the learner groups. Classrooms at HMP Prescoed are adequately sized and maintained well. The accommodation used for art and craft sessions at HMP Usk is poor. The room is inadequate for the number of learners in each group. Learners can only work on small-scale artwork. Some craftwork can be carried out in a very small room next to the art room. Access to water is not adequate for art and craft and not enough display space is available. Some artwork is displayed in a nearby corridor. Basic art resources are provided, but are not available for learners to take away to work with on their own. At HMP Usk, only one toilet is readily accessible for learners.

84. The self-assessment report was inaccurate and did not identify many of the strengths and weaknesses identified by inspectors.

