

INSPECTION REPORT

HMP Blundeston

03 March 2006



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
- adult information, advice and guidance services (**nextstep**).

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*

INSPECTION REPORT

HMP Blundeston

Contents

Summary

Description of the provider	1
Overall effectiveness	1
Key challenges for HMP Blundeston	2
Grades	2
About the inspection	3
Key Findings	4
What learners like about HMP Blundeston	9
What learners think HMP Blundeston could improve	9

Detailed inspection findings

Leadership and management	10
Equality of opportunity	12
Quality improvement	13
Engineering and manufacturing technologies	15
Construction, planning and the built environment	18
Information and communications technology	20
Leisure, travel and tourism	23
Preparation for life and work	26
Business administration and law	30

INSPECTION REPORT

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROVIDER

1. HMP Blundeston (the prison) is a adult category C training prison for men. It is located near Blundeston village, about four miles north of Lowestoft. The prison opened in 1963 and was originally designed for 288 offenders, but was extended in 1975 with the addition of two new wings. In 1997 a new induction unit, formerly part of the healthcare centre, was opened, increasing the prison's operating capacity from 408 to 424. A further increase in population occurred in 2002 with the opening of the therapeutic community, holding 40 offenders. The operational capacity of the prison is now 464. There are currently 459 offenders, most of whom have an average length of stay is over six months, although some of whom stay for one to four years. Most of the offenders come from other prisons and approximately 24 per cent of them are foreign nationals.

2. The prison's head of learning and skills is responsible for the education and training. Education at the prison is supplied under a contract with Norwich City College (the college) and is offered mostly on a part-time basis. Learners choosing to study part time are released from work to attend classes during the daytime. An education manager employed by the college is responsible for the operational management of the education. Classes are also available during the evening. A range of subjects is available in the education department including English for speakers of other languages (ESOL), a computer literacy, information technology (IT), business technology course, business studies, art, literacy and numeracy. There are two offenders' charities that provides offenders with support to gain an accredited health and safety qualification in the workshops. There are 109 offenders attending programmes in education.

3. The workshop provision includes welding, tailoring, laundry, printing, woodworking and industrial cleaning. The carpentry and welding workshops offer accredited training. Nineteen learners are working towards carpentry qualifications and 15 are working towards welding qualifications. Other workshops offer units of the health and safety qualifications along with literacy and numeracy support. Attendance in the workshops is usually full time, although some offenders attend on a part-time basis and spend the other part of the day in education or gymnasium classes. The education department visits the workshops and gives individual tuition to learners who are unable to attend scheduled classes.

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS

Grade 3

4. **The overall effectiveness of the provision is satisfactory.** The prison's leadership and management of provision is satisfactory. Its approach to equality of opportunity is satisfactory, but its arrangements for quality improvement are inadequate. Training is good in construction crafts and satisfactory in information and communications technology (ICT), business administration, engineering, sport, leisure and recreation and preparation for life and work.

5. The inspection team had little confidence in the reliability of the self-assessment process. The first self-assessment report was produced in December 2005 and updated in February 2006. It does not include leadership and management, quality improvement and equal opportunities. It only covers the industrial workshops and other work areas. The self-assessment report for the education department consists of end-of-course reviews. Self-assessment is not an integral part of the prison's development and does not include all education and training sections.

6. The provider has demonstrated that it has sufficient capacity to make improvements. The head of learning and skills appointed in October 2005 has concentrated on implementing quality assurance processes in the work areas and industrial workshops. Ten staff members have completed an initial 12-week teacher training programme, and a further 10 are working towards it. This is ensuring consistency in schemes of work and lesson plans. Clear guidance has been given on internal monitoring and the roles and responsibilities of the quality improvement group.

KEY CHALLENGES FOR HMP BLUNDESTON:

- maintain the pace of quality improvement
- improve the range of learning resources and provision
- improve the promotion of equality and diversity
- improve the literacy and numeracy support on the residential wings

GRADES

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

Grades awarded at inspection

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

Engineering and manufacturing technologies			3
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade	
<i>Engineering</i>		3	
Other government-funded provision	15	3	

Construction, planning and the built environment			2
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade	
<i>Construction crafts</i>		2	
Other government-funded provision	19	2	

Information and communications technology 3		
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
<i>ICT for users</i>		3
Other government-funded provision	24	3

Leisure, travel and tourism 3		
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
<i>Sport, leisure and recreation</i>		3
Other government-funded provision	28	3

Preparation for life and work 3		
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
<i>Literacy and numeracy</i>		3
Other government-funded provision	107	3

Business administration and law 3		
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
<i>Administration</i>		3
Other government-funded provision	14	3

ABOUT THE INSPECTION

7. ICT, construction, engineering, business administration, physical education (PE) and preparation for life and work were reported on and graded. Evidence was examined from other areas of employment including hospitality, horticulture and other workshop areas. These were not reported on and graded separately, but were used to support judgements in the key findings of the report. There were no visits to the prison before the week of the inspection.

Number of inspectors	5
Number of inspection days	20
Number of learners interviewed	72
Number of staff interviewed	24
Number of subcontractors interviewed	3
Number of locations/sites/learning centres visited	1

KEY FINDINGS

Achievements and standards

8. Achievement rates for the areas of learning are broadly satisfactory. Learners in the industrial workshops are producing high-quality finished items and developing good practical skills. The achievement rate in literacy and numeracy programmes is satisfactory, with over 60 per cent achieving an accredited outcome to a level higher than the starting point identified at initial assessment. The achievement rate on ESOL programmes is good at 70 per cent. The achievement rate for construction learners on national vocational qualifications (NVQs) is low. Most of these learners are transferred or released before they can complete their qualifications.

9. **In preparation for life and work, learners on the visual arts course achieve very high standards.** They work in a wide variety of media and have an understanding of the different aspects of visual art. **The achievement rate is good on the level 1 ICT qualification.** Achievement and retention for ICT key skills and computerised accounts courses are satisfactory. **Learners develop and achieve good IT skills.** In business administration, retention and attendance rates are satisfactory. **Unit rates are good on the Firm Start course in setting up a business. Learners develop good practical business skills** and are good at applying business theory to explore the viability of proposed business ventures.

10. **In PE, learners develop good skills.** They are readily able to identify the benefits they have experienced, such as increased fitness, confidence and self-esteem. Attendance and punctuality are good. Those on accredited courses have a satisfactory achievement rate, and achieve their qualifications in an appropriate length of time.

The quality of provision

Grades given to learning sessions

	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Total
Information and communications technology	0	1	3	0	4
Preparation for life and work	1	4	4	0	9
Business administration and law	0	1	1	0	2
Total	1	6	8	0	15

11. The table above only shows the areas of learning in which two or more learning sessions have been observed and graded. Teaching and learning are satisfactory or better. However, no consistent attempts are made to account for the wide variety of offenders' individual needs and interests, especially in preparation for life and work. Lesson plans are completed but often carry insufficient information on how the individual needs of learners will be met.

12. In ICT, teaching and learning are effectively planned. Tutors use a wide range of learning methods, and make good use of question-and-answer techniques to test learners' understanding. Learners are encouraged to evaluate appropriately the quality of their work.

13. In business administration, tutors use a good range of teaching techniques to engage

learners' interest and cater for their learning style. Feedback on progress and target-setting for learners is satisfactory.

14. In construction, teaching standards meet those required by industry. **Learners can use a good range of high-specification machinery as well as smaller machines and hand-tools.** Learners are producing a high standard of work. **In engineering, the workshop is well resourced.** Learners use good, up-to-date equipment which helps them develop commercial skills. **However, training throughout the facility is poorly co-ordinated** and does not always effectively meet the needs of learners. Learners are not clear on where priorities lie with regards to training and work.

15. **Good progression routes to industry-recognised and valued qualifications are available to PE learners.** Learners are satisfactorily progressing through a range of coaching qualifications. Teaching is satisfactory, with a range of teaching methods used. Learners are well motivated and fully engaged in their lessons.

16. **Support for literacy, numeracy and language skills is poor in the workshops and PE.** Learners may be referred to the education department but this is often not followed up. Offenders receive no support on the wings from literacy, numeracy and communication tutors.

17. Resources are generally satisfactory **but in preparation for life and work they are inadequate.** Some learners are using literary texts aimed at primary school-age pupils and there is insufficient ICT support in classrooms. Accommodation to support learners in visual arts is inadequate. There is insufficient space and facilities for learners to work in a wide range of mediums. In the workshops there is a newly refurbished classroom in the construction area. However, there is no quiet area where trainers can help and guide learners in a suitable environment.

18. A satisfactory range of assessment methods is used for all courses. Where portfolios are used, they contain a satisfactory level of work. Internal moderation processes have recently been introduced to the workshops and are satisfactory. Internal verification in PE is incomplete. Actions previously identified by external verifiers have not been completed. There has been no sharing of good practice from other areas of the establishment.

Leadership and management

19. **Recent initiatives have been highly effective in implementing a range of accredited training in the industrial workshops and work.** The prison has introduced progression awards focused on teamwork, personal development and quality control. These are providing good progression routes. Staff in the work areas are enthusiastic and encourage learners to progress.

20. **The prison has implemented a good range of new quality assurance processes to support staff in the industrial workshops and work.** These processes are easy to understand and use. Staff appreciate the guidance and support given by the recently appointed head of learning and skills in implementing the processes.

21. Promotion of equality and diversity is satisfactory. The race relations group promotes offenders' and staff members' understanding of different nationalities. However, the prison population does not have sufficient representation in this group. Learners have a

satisfactory understanding of their rights and responsibilities. The education department adequately covers equality and diversity issues at induction. Learners have an appropriate appreciation for how the prison rules and law protect them during their training. Learners know how to raise any concerns by formal or informal means. Most issues are suitably resolved by informal methods.

22. Data is not effectively used to identify trends in equality and diversity. Although ethnicity data is available with regards to allocation to work and activities this is not analysed to identify any trends.

23. Assessment and internal verification processes are satisfactory. The relevant documents are clear. There is a variation in how learners' progress is monitored.

24. Links with education and other services in the prison are weak. **The prison does not sufficiently co-ordinate all of the subcontractors to identify all training activities and to avoid duplication.** Details of initial assessment are not always passed on to all members of staff involved with learners. Learners are not aware of many of the business development activities within the prison and the work towards developing a fully integrated regime, or of the complexities that this produces, particularly in parity of pay.

25. Arrangements for quality improvement are inadequate. Recent initiatives have given the quality improvement group clear roles and responsibilities, but have not yet implemented any of the purposes identified. An action plan has been developed but sets very short-term targets, to be completed within one or two months. Education departments and training areas are operating in isolation. No structures are in place for staff to share best practice.

Leadership and management

Strengths

- very effective recent initiatives to implement quality assurance processes in industrial workshops and work
- particularly effective action to recognise and accredit skill development in industrial workshops and work

Weaknesses

- inadequate co-ordination of all training and learning activities in the prison
- inadequate self-assessment process to improve the quality of provision

Engineering and manufacturing technologies

Engineering

Strengths

- good resources to support production and learning
- good development of learners' skills

Weaknesses

- slow progress in accrediting skills
- weak co-ordination of all training

Construction, planning and the built environment

Construction crafts

Strengths

- good range of qualifications recognised by industry
- high standard of learners' work
- good resources for production and training

Weaknesses

- insufficient guidance to achievement of full NVQ
- inadequate literacy and numeracy support from education department

Information and communications technology

ICT for users

Strengths

- good achievement of level 1 ICT qualifications
- good development and achievement of IT skills

Weaknesses

- limited range of accredited provision
- insufficient use of short-term targets

Leisure, travel and tourism

Sport, leisure and recreation

Strengths

- good progression routes to industry-recognised qualifications
- good development of skills

Weaknesses

- insufficient knowledge and understanding of quality improvement systems by staff
- insufficient links with education

Preparation for life and work

Literacy and numeracy

Strengths

- good progress in literacy, numeracy, communication, social and life skills
- high standards of work in visual arts

Weaknesses

- insufficient progress reviews
- some inadequate and inappropriate resources

Business administration and law

Administration

Strengths

- good achievement rates on the level 2 course in starting a business
- good development of practical business skills

Weaknesses

- inadequate research facilities to allow learners to test the viability of potential business opportunities
- slow implementation of improvements to assessment processes

WHAT LEARNERS LIKE ABOUT HMP BLUNDESTON:

- the standards of tuition in the workshops and industries
- the opportunities to gain 'real' qualifications
- the good-quality resources in carpentry
- the helpful tutors
- their growth in confidence and personal skills
- being treated with respect

WHAT LEARNERS THINK HMP BLUNDESTON COULD IMPROVE:

- the opportunity for qualifications in some workshops
- the parity of pay
- the provision of breaks and somewhere to smoke in education
- the better resources in visual arts, ICT and business studies
- access to courses outside the prison

DETAILED INSPECTION FINDINGS

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Grade 3

Strengths

- very effective recent initiatives to implement quality assurance processes in industrial workshops and work
- particularly effective action to recognise and accredit skill development in industrial workshops and work

Weaknesses

- inadequate co-ordination of all training and learning activities in the prison
- inadequate self-assessment process to improve the quality of provision

26. Since the appointment of a head of learning and skills in October 2005 after a 12-month absence, the prison has prioritised developing skills recognition for the industrial workshops and work. Staff development has taken place, with 10 staff attending a 12-week basic teacher training programme at a local further education college. This has allowed consistency and understanding of the development of schemes of work and lesson plans. There has been a good process to change the available qualifications to bite-sized achievable qualifications to meet the needs of the learners, especially in carpentry. The prison is in the final stages of implementing progression awards in a number of the workshops where it is exceedingly difficult to gain qualifications in the work carried out, such as print processing. Instructional staff are keen and enthusiastic and appreciate the help and guidance they have received, particularly in understanding the requirements of a training programme.

27. The co-ordination of all the training activities within the prison is inadequate, but considerable improvements have been made since the appointment of the head of learning and skills. Education programmes are managed satisfactorily by the education manager. An offenders' charity has been working in the prison since February 2005 to introduce basic qualifications into those areas where previously there were none. One hundred and seventy-five learners have participated in and successfully completed a self-learning package on health and safety. There is no co-ordination with other training activities and education as to who is involved on this project, however. Training plans are not linked with sentence planning. Only 50 per cent of learners have a sentence plan. Many learners leave the prison without clear targets or an understanding of what is their next progression route. The Foundation Training Company, which provides training for offenders before release, also offers basic IT programmes. No links exist between this company and the prison's education department to ascertain if learners have previously attended programmes, and in some cases offenders repeat work.

28. Most of the offenders who leave the prison are transferred to other prisons. The prison has a few links with employers. Very few offenders are granted a temporary license.

29. The prison's catering section has enrolled five learners to begin a basic catering programme during the week of the inspection. Twenty-seven offenders are allocated to work in the kitchen. Staff have prepared well to implement training into catering,

producing detailed schemes of work and lesson plans. The catering tutor has benefited from attending a basic teacher training course, and has received good guidance from the head of learning and skills to implement training. Training for a basic hygiene certification is usually given to all offenders within eight weeks of commencing work in the kitchen or serving on the residential wings. This eight-week window has now lapsed and currently no basic food hygiene training is taking place. Since September 2005, 43 learners have achieved a full certificate in food hygiene.

30. The prison has made slow progress in implementing accredited training in horticulture, which was identified as a requirement in the previous inspection report produced by HMIP in 2002. Centre approval is currently being sought for the accreditation of basic horticultural skills tests. Resources are limited within the prison walls, and the facilities used by the prison outside its walls require considerable improvement. The horticulture department has been successful in achieving some prestigious waste management awards and 55 per cent of waste from the prison is recycled. For example, the sawdust from the carpentry department is sent to a horse sanctuary which reciprocates by providing horse manure for the prison's gardens.

31. The packaging section is attended by 32 offenders. Most spend half a day in the facility and half a day in education. The section assembles food packs containing breakfast and tea items for HMP Blundeston and other prisons. During the inspection, an average of 14 offenders attended each session. No formal qualifications are available in the packaging section, although offenders can obtain a health and safety certificate by completing assignments alongside their work. Two offenders are currently working towards this certificate. Assignments are assessed by the workshop supervisor and internally verified within the prison. One offender is currently taking a health and safety qualification through an offenders' charity. No other qualifications are being followed.

32. Twenty-seven offenders attend the laundry workshop. Most attend full time, although some also attend education for sessions throughout the week. Seventeen offenders were in the laundry during the inspection. An officer instructor and a civilian instructor manage the workshop. The laundry has good commercial-standard equipment including washer-driers and presses, which it uses to clean items for the prison and other prisons. The size of the facility is barely adequate for the volume of work, and staff are looking to expand into other areas. Learners currently have no area to rest or to meet education staff, and have to work in areas which occasionally cause the fire exit to become blocked with mobile clothes bins. Noise levels on the workshop are also high and may not comply with soon-to-be-introduced noise regulations, if occupants do not wear ear protection.

33. No qualifications are currently offered in the laundry, although staff have met with other prison service laundry staff with a view to introducing an externally accredited qualification. The prison is reviewing whether this qualification is the most appropriate to learners or whether a more generic qualification would be more useful. Offenders in the workshop develop good teamwork skills in producing products to a good standard under strict time constraints. Some take responsibility for overseeing particular functions of the laundry.

34. Soft furnishing provision has been offered for less than two weeks. Eight learners have enrolled, all of whom are working towards the OCN progression award. The standard of work is good, with learners developing useful design and perspective skills in the use of

colour and fabrics. The instructor is highly experienced and qualified, and provides useful textbooks and journals to assist learners. The workshop is spacious and well appointed, although it does not yet have a computer for the instructor to develop handouts and receive information on learners.

35. The textile workshop produces clothing and household items for the prison service. Up to 46 learners attend the workshop. Work involves cutting, machining, pressing finishing and packaging. Four instructors manage the workshop. The turnover of offenders is high, with many preferring other activities. The workshop has a high proportion of foreign nationals. Offenders learn useful skills including teamwork and quality assuring products. Many learners also attend education or benefit from education staff visiting the workshop to provide literacy and numeracy support. Offenders who speak English as an additional language attend the education department for language support.

36. There are currently no learners on the cleaning course. There is no member of staff to deliver the course. Resources are limited, with most training taking place on the prison wings.

37. Thirty-five learners attend the print workshop and work in print origination, printing and packaging. During the inspection, an average of 22 learners were present. Resources include high-specification desktop publishing software running on industry-standard computers, computer-controlled guillotines and electronic drilling machines. There is a good productive atmosphere in the workshop. No qualifications are currently offered, although NOCN progression awards are planned. The section previously ran national vocational qualification (NVQ) courses and other externally accredited qualifications but these have lapsed in recent times.

Equality of opportunity

Contributory grade 3

38. The prison has made satisfactory developments to promote diversity awareness among staff. A diversity training programme commenced in May 2005 for all instructors and prison officers and for some education staff. The prison has carried out a number of initiatives, particularly in black history week, to promote the understanding of diversity. A rap band has been formed as a result of black history week with the specific remit to promote diversity issues. The prison has a black minority ethnic population of 43 per cent and a foreign national population of 24 per cent. A database is kept of foreign nationals who can provide help and support with language to other offenders. An offender diversity group meets fortnightly but does not include representation from most of the main minority ethnic groups within the prison. All members of the diversity group are black. The prison has run two programmes based on external promotions which have helped to raise understanding and awareness of diversity among offenders. The prison does not accept any offenders with restricted mobility. Access to work and education activities is satisfactory. A labour allocation board meets weekly to allocate work. Where a sentence plan is available, the board uses this to ensure that the allocation meets the offender's needs. Offenders who are Muslims are not penalised in pay when attending prayer on a Friday.

39. The process of accrediting qualifications is slow in some work areas. It is particularly slow in horticulture, where it was recommended in 2002 that accredited training be implemented. There had been a lack of expertise within the prison until the appointment of the head of learning and skills. Learning opportunities are not sufficiently promoted in

the prison. Learners receive information at induction but there is no reinforcement of what training and learning opportunities are available during their time at the prison. Although the prison has carried out work to bring about an integrated regime, the complexity of this structure is not effectively communicated and many learners do not understand how the system and pay structure work. The prison reviewed its activities in late 2005 with the main objectives of minimising some lengthy processes, particularly that of employment changes, and of incorporating sentence planning into work allocation.

40. The prison makes minimal use of data to monitor equality of opportunity. Although the prison's ethnicity code is clearly displayed for all offenders allocated to work activities, data is not analysed to identify any trends in occupancy or achievement rates. The education department conducts little analysis of offenders' completion data with regards to their ethnicity.

Quality improvement

Contributory grade 4

41. The prison has developed and implemented a good range of quality assurance procedures to support the training programmes. Terms of reference have been produced for the quality improvement group, clearly indicating how all areas of activity should be represented, along with identifying the purpose of the group. This includes self-assessment, analysing data, setting targets and monitoring standards. The prison has produced good guidance on how to implement internal moderation for all those activities taking place in industries and work. The quality improvement group has met once since the appointment of the head of learning and skills, and is now in a good position to carry forward the quality improvement agenda. Details are available of which forms to use for activities such as sampling the work of learners and assessors. Although the quality assurance procedures are in the early stages of implementation, staff are clear about what is required of them to assure the quality of the provision.

42. Despite the position of head of learning and skills being vacant for 12 months, the prison has maintained a satisfactory programme of training and education and is now moving forward to offer accreditation in all aspects of work. Recording of learners' progress, assessment and internal verification are all satisfactory.

43. The self-assessment process within the prison is very new. Self-assessment has not been part of the prison's quality process over the past few years. The current self-assessment report was produced in December 2005 and revised in February 2006. It was compiled by the head of learning and skills and the industries manager, with some input from industries staff but no input from learners. It makes no reference to leadership and management, quality improvement or equality of opportunity. Education provision was not co-ordinated in the self-assessment process, with the self-assessment report for education consisting of end-of-course reviews. Education staff have a poor understanding of the self-assessment process. Feedback from learners was not used. An action plan has been produced as a result of the self-assessment process but some of the actions are short-term. Staff in the work areas have been effective in taking on the self-assessment process and are working towards rectifying the weakness identified in the self-assessment report. Action plans have been produced for each work area.

44. Lesson observations in education take place. Most lessons were graded as satisfactory. There is no overall strategy in education to improve the quality of teaching and learning. Data is held in education, but is not rigorously analysed to identify trends.

HMP BLUNDESTON

Data is held so that achievement and retention data can be given, but this is not used as a routine part of improving the education process. The subcontractor for education is due to be changed in August 2006.

AREAS OF LEARNING

Engineering and manufacturing technologies

Grade 3

Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Engineering		3
Other government-funded provision	15	3

45. Fifteen learners work in the welding workshop, which has been fully operational for one year. Learners are working towards a variety of introductory certificates to welding including gas-shield, oxy-acetylene and manual metal arc-welding. The workshop produces security items including gates and fences for the prison service, as well as decorative items for the local community and charities. One full-time instructor oversees all workshop activity. A new member of staff has been appointed and is due to start within the next month. The workshop is open for four and a half days a week, with all but one learner attending full time. Additional support for literacy and numeracy is available in the workshop.

Engineering

Strengths

- good resources to support production and learning
- good development of learners' skills

Weaknesses

- slow progress in accrediting skills
- weak co-ordination of all training

Achievement and standards

46. Learners' skills are developed well in the workshops. Products made for the prison service are accurately constructed and finished to a high standard. Learners develop skills to evaluate their own work critically and arrive at practical ways in which they can improve. Some learners have experience of welding before their prison sentence. They continue to learn throughout their time in the workshop, revisiting the application of theory and rectifying bad habits. Learners frequently obtain additional qualifications in first aid, and health and safety during their time in the workshop. The welding section also has links with an offenders' charity which organises projects that benefit the community. Learners have recently taken part in a project which involved designing and fabricating water-carrying trolleys for use in Africa.

47. Production and training are separate functions of the workshop. Learners generally make slow progress towards achieving formal recognition for their work. In total, 18 introductory units of an externally accredited qualification have been achieved by 10 learners since the workshop reopened four months ago. One learner attending the workshop for over four months has yet to do any of the test pieces required for

certification, despite viewing the workshop as a learning rather than a work opportunity. Learners involved in making items for the prison service are rarely able to link this to their training targets.

The quality of provision

48. The workshop is well resourced for the production of materials for the prison service and for learners to develop their skills and knowledge. All learners wear appropriate personal protective equipment. The layout of the workshop has been designed for maximum use. Machinery and equipment reflects industry standards. After a request from learners, the library obtained several books on welding which learners can take to their cells or use in the workshop. There is good equipment including up-to-date gas, metal and oxy-acetylene equipment. Mechanical saws, welding torches and extraction fans are of a good standard and help learners develop their skills in a realistic commercial environment. However, lighting in some parts of the workshop is barely adequate.

49. The recording of learners' progress is satisfactory. A training record is kept for each allocated learner with references to the detailed workshop training manual. Induction is carried out during learners' first week of attendance and includes health and safety, expected behaviour and how they can be rewarded for effort. Teaching and training take into account the learning needs of each learner and include a variety of methods such as verbal and written instructions and practical demonstration. Good use is made of peer support in the workshop, where more experienced learners assist new entrants. All the assessments for the test pieces produced by learners meet the awarding bodies' standards.

50. Training throughout the facility is poorly co-ordinated and does not always effectively meet the needs of learners. There is some confusion by learners as to where the priorities lie. Although learners are developing good standards of work, the process within the workshop is very production orientated. Learners are not given the opportunity to be credited for the skills that they are developing in the early stages of attending the workshop. Some learners have been in the workshop for over four months without any assessment. Often, production supersedes the requirements of education and training. Literacy and numeracy support workers from the education department visit the workshop weekly to provide support, but this is not always focused on learners that need it and support is not adequately guided by learning plans. Level 1 qualifications are available, but are not adequately promoted to learners. Instructional officers are not aware of the details of learning support and do not always effectively link literacy, numeracy and language skills to workshop activities.

Leadership and management

51. Management of the welding programme is satisfactory. The manager of the workshop is industry trained and qualified and has been prominent in the design of the workshop to ensure it meets and reflects industry standards. Records of learners' progress are kept and are transferred with the offender if they are released or transferred. Instructors have recently introduced the quality assurance processes implemented by the new head of learning and skills which are improving the standard of record-keeping. The self-assessment process is insufficiently developed. The self-assessment report makes sufficient comments about the way workshops and industries are managed, but insufficient use is made of data to make decisions. Quality assurance procedures refer more to the products made in the workshop rather than the training process. Equality of opportunity is satisfactory, with

good representation in the provision from all parts of the prison.

Construction, planning and the built environment**Grade 2**

Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Construction crafts		2
Other government-funded provision	19	2

52. The carpentry workshop has 19 learners attending for training and work in bench joinery. The provision includes NVQs at levels 1, 2 and 3 in bench joinery and a locally devised, nationally recognised qualification at level 1. A NOCN progression award has only recently been introduced to meet the needs of learners who have no previous practical experience or do not spend enough time in the workshops to achieve an NVQ.

53. Two full-time instructors oversee the training and assessment. The workshop fulfils a production need for the prison service, making individual or small-volume products including doors, tables and shelves. Learners are able to collect evidence for their qualifications while working in the production area. The workshop is open for four and a half days a week.

Construction crafts*Strengths*

- good range of qualifications recognised by industry
- high standard of learners' work
- good resources for production and training

Weaknesses

- insufficient guidance to achievement of full NVQ
- inadequate literacy and numeracy support from education department

Achievement and standards

54. Learners produce high-quality finished items. They are given ample time to develop skills before they carry out work, which is procured by other prisons. For example, learners produce half-size models which require the same preparation and use the same jointing techniques as larger versions. They do this with good support and feedback from their instructor or peers who have previously worked in the construction industry. Portfolios are also of a very good standard. They contain photographs and descriptive write-ups of activities, which help present evidence to assessors and verifiers. The portfolios also improve learners' confidence in seeking employment. One learner recently secured employment in a joinery workshop after having been released on temporary licence to attend an interview.

55. The number of learners who achieve the full NVQ is low. In the past year, of the 60 learners who started training, only 11 achieved the full NVQ at level 2. Similarly, only three learners have achieved the level 3 NVQ. Most of the 60 learners have been transferred to another prison or have been released. The average length of stay at the prison is shorter

than the time taken to complete a full NVQ. Those learners who stay for a suitable period of time are able to complete the NVQ. However, all those who have started in the workshop have received some units towards the full NVQ. The prison has recognised the difficulty in completing the NVQ and has introduced the NOCN progression awards, which all learners will achieve before starting the NVQ.

The quality of provision

56. NVQs are the standard required by industry and are a requirement for the construction skills certification scheme, which operatives require if they wish to work on many larger construction sites. Achievement of these qualifications significantly increases learners' confidence and many are keen to pursue employment or further training on release. NOCN progression awards at a lower level have recently been introduced to better meet the needs of learners who do not have sufficient experience or hand skills, or who do not wish to pursue training at the higher NVQ level. The progression award focuses on teamwork, personal development and quality control, as well as enabling the development of skills.

57. The workshop has the same high-specification machinery commonly found in larger companies. Similarly, there are also smaller machines and good hand tools which help learners develop measuring and cutting techniques. There is a good supply of timber and fixing materials and a newly refurbished classroom in which formal theory sessions are carried out. Staff are well qualified and have good industry experience. New staff attend a further education college to work towards a basic teaching qualification.

58. The area of learning's links with the education department and training activities such as the project run by an offenders' charity are insufficient. The chance to gain additional qualifications such as health and safety are not promoted within the carpentry workshop. Additional support is available in the workshop but this is not adequately promoted to those who most need it. Support takes place in workshops but instructors do not have details of the support work carried out, and cannot complement the support with workshop tasks. Learners, many of whom wish to further their learning or seek employment in carpentry, are not aware of which of the business development provision in the prison or the support agencies and training providers which can provide assistance on release.

Leadership and management

59. Management of the curriculum of carpentry is satisfactory. Day-to-day operations are well managed, but quality assurance systems are insufficiently developed. For example, there are insufficient procedures to analyse and develop action plans as a result of external verifiers' visits. Few lessons have been observed to date. Equality of opportunity is satisfactory, with a good representation in the area of learning from the diverse population of the prison. Qualifications are appropriate and management is reviewing the provision to try and meet the needs of all learners better.

Information and communications technology**Grade 3**

Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
<i>ICT for users</i>		3
Other government-funded provision	24	3

60. Twenty-four learners are taking ICT qualifications. There is no waiting list for courses. The education department offers two courses in ICT, one at level 1 and one at level 2. An IT key skills qualification is also available at levels 1 to 3 to learners who complete the literacy and numeracy end test, usually at level 2. Learners can join an ICT class at any time of the year. All learners are working towards nationally recognised accredited qualifications.

61. All learners' literacy and numeracy skills are assessed during induction, before they commence their course. Learners are not required to take an assessment of their ICT skills and knowledge before starting a course.

62. Group size is a maximum of 12 learners. Courses are offered every day of the week except for Friday afternoon. Learners can choose to attend either in the morning or afternoon. In addition every Thursday, an evening class for accredited courses is offered. A non-accredited introduction course for learners new to computers is available on Tuesday and Wednesday evenings. ICT classes are offered on a 'drop-in' basis for one and a half hours a week. Some ICT training has recently been introduced in the print shop. A charitable organisation offers the opportunity for learners to achieve a foundation level ICT qualification as part of the resettlement course. There is no weekend provision.

63. Classes are taught in one of two education centre classrooms equipped with 24 computers in total. ICT is taught by four part-time teaching staff. The area is led by a part-time ICT tutor/co-ordinator. Two staff carry out internal verification.

ICT for users***Strengths***

- good achievement of level 1 ICT qualifications
- good development and achievement of IT skills

Weaknesses

- limited range of accredited provision
- insufficient use of short-term targets

Achievement and standards

64. Achievement rates are good on the level 1 ICT qualification. The achievement rate for learners who completed their training in the six-month period between May and October 2005 was 86 per cent. Current learners are making satisfactory or better progress. Retention rates on all courses are satisfactory. Achievement and retention rates for ICT key

skills and computerised accounts courses are satisfactory.

65. Learners develop and achieve good IT skills. Many learners have not used computers before. They develop satisfactory or better skills in using a keyboard and mouse. Learners are able to demonstrate a good level of competence in using the computer equipment and software applications after only a short time on their programme. They develop a sound appreciation of the application of a range of computer functions. Learners are effectively able to select the most appropriate computer function for a given activity. They can successfully use their knowledge and skills in a variety of situations. The quality of learners' work is at least satisfactory. Learners behave in an appropriate manner. Most learners develop good working relationships with staff and other learners. Many can work effectively independently or collaboratively. Learners' punctuality at the start of lessons is satisfactory. Punctuality is generally good.

The quality of provision

66. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Sessions are effectively planned and managed by tutors. All lessons observed during the inspection were satisfactory or better. In most lessons, learners receive effective individual teaching and guidance from tutors. In the better sessions, tutors spoke to all learners in turn to check their understanding of the skills and knowledge being taught. A wide range of learning methods is used. Tutors use question-and-answer techniques well, to test learners' understanding of why they are carrying out a particular action. They encourage learners to evaluate the quality of their work appropriately and carry out suitable corrective action where needed. For example, in a computerised accounts session a learner was encouraged to identify successfully an input error, carry out relevant adjustments of the figures and reflect on the financial effect on an organisation should the error have not been corrected. All tutors cope well with mixed-ability groups of learners. Learners work at an appropriate pace from suitably written worksheets. However, little use is made of learning material to encourage learners who would benefit from tasks written in simpler English. Insufficient use is made of electronic display facilities to allow staff to demonstrate ICT topics and related techniques through a computer. Assessment of learning styles is not effectively used to influence the choice of appropriate teaching strategies. Tutors usually emphasise correct health and safety aspects of using ICT equipment, and most emphasise the need for good posture. However, in some cases learners are not reminded of the need to take regular breaks away from the computer.

67. The two dedicated ICT classrooms are satisfactory. The space in the classroom is limited but adequate for learners to carry out their tasks. Both classrooms have suitable wall displays to emphasise classroom subject identity. However, there is no celebration of the quality of learners' achievement through displays of their work. The computers are of a satisfactory standard and run relevant and up-to-date software. Learners have access to printers that allow them to review the quality of their work in colour. However, there is no computer network and learners must store their work on floppy disks. There is no internet access. Many functions related to e-mails are available to learners but they cannot send or receive e-mails as part of an intranet system. This limits the potential for learners to develop new skills. Staff are suitably qualified and able to update their technical and professional skills through relevant staff development events. All learners receive an appropriate induction to the education department and their programme.

68. The range of accredited provision is limited. The provision at level 1 and 2 meets most

learners' needs in software packages such as word processing, spreadsheets and databases. Progress from level 1 to 2 is satisfactory. An introductory computer course is available but does not offer the opportunity for learners to work towards an entry-level qualification. In some cases learners are not suitably challenged by the level of courses available. Learners are not able to carry out further training at level 3 or above or effectively study a wider range of topics. There are no courses of a technical nature such as programming or computer technician.

69. All learners complete an individual learning plan that includes long-term targets for their programme. Learners' successful achievement of elements of their course is satisfactorily monitored. Activities that learners have completed are appropriately recorded. However, insufficient use is made of short-term targets to allow learners effectively to monitor their progress during their programme. Where tutors do set targets, the targets are often not sufficiently detailed or written in a meaningful way that is useful to learners. Short-term targets are often not effectively used to monitor and evaluate learners' achievement or update long-term goals noted on the individual learning plan. Tutors do not always set learners measurable targets that identify key stages in their learning. Progress reviews are not always effectively used to record the range and level of skills learnt and to give detailed feedback on progress.

Leadership and management

70. The management of the ICT programmes is satisfactory. Staff roles and responsibilities are clear. Communication is good. Effective informal communication is used to keep staff informed of relevant issues. Formal meetings are regularly held and appropriately recorded. However, actions are not always time-bound. Staff work effectively as a team. Staff appraisal is effective. There are good opportunities for staff development. Arrangements for examinations are satisfactory.

71. Equality of opportunity is satisfactory. It is suitably covered at induction and reinforced during classroom activities. Learners and staff treat each other with respect. Learners have an appropriate understanding of their rights and responsibilities. Insufficient use is made of displays within classrooms in languages other than English.

72. Quality improvement arrangements are satisfactory. Learners' views are regularly sought by the prison and used to introduce improvement. However, learners do not automatically receive feedback on the outcome of the analysis of the questionnaires that they complete. Assessment practice is satisfactory. Staff have adequate opportunities to share good practice. The process to quality assure teaching by observation is satisfactory and has secured some quality improvements. However, the self-assessment process is inadequate. ICT tutors had little involvement in the formulation of the self-assessment report. The report is not sufficiently evaluative or critical. A development plan has been produced as part of the self-assessment process which considers identified weaknesses. It does not adequately focus on enhancing the quality of training to improve retention and achievement rates. Data is not fully used to set targets for quality improvement purposes. There is insufficient use of data in the self-assessment and course review process.

Leisure, travel and tourism**Grade 3**

Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
<i>Sport, leisure and recreation</i>		3
Other government-funded provision	28	3

73. Offenders can participate in a range of PE activities including basketball, badminton, volleyball, weight training and other sports. The sports accommodation comprises of a two-court sports hall, which is also used as a weight-training room, an artificial turf pitch and a cardiovascular exercise suite. A classroom is available for theory sessions adjacent to the PE department. Activities form part of a structured recreational PE programme.

Recreational PE is organised on a weekly timetable that includes weekend and some evening sessions. There is a limited amount of daytime recreational PE as the facilities are used to deliver the PE courses. The PE department offers separate sessions for offenders with specific needs, such as those aged over 50 or those with health issues or injuries. Learners apply to attend the PE programme which is run three times a year and lasts for 16 weeks. This programme is made up of a community sports leaders award, an emergency resuscitation award, a weightlifting leaders award and a level 1 NVQ in sports and recreation. Some learners are able to progress to the level 2 NVQ in service operations.

74. Currently, 28 learners are working towards the level 1 NVQ. Sports courses take place on a part-time basis, on Monday to Thursday each week. A half-day PE induction takes place once a week. All offenders must attend this course before they are able to use the gymnasium. Two gym orderlies work each day, performing cleaning and some instructional activities. Five PE and sports officers deliver the recreation and education programme. All have a range of coaching qualifications.

Sport, leisure and recreation***Strengths***

- good progression routes to industry-recognised qualifications
- good development of skills

Weaknesses

- insufficient knowledge and understanding of quality improvement systems by staff
- insufficient links with education

Achievement and standards

75. Learners develop good skills. They are able to identify the benefits of attending the PE course, such as increased fitness, confidence and self-esteem. At the half-way point of their programme they are all able to confidently deliver warm-up sessions and appropriate teaching points for several sports to peers. Attendance and punctuality are good at all sessions of the PE programme. This encourages a good work ethic in learners. Learners are encouraged to self-assess their coaching skills, and are realistic in their judgements and supportive of each other. They record self-assessment and are able to review it during the

course. Learners achieve their qualifications in an appropriate length of time.

76. Since January 2005, 14 learners have completed community sports leaders awards, 23 have gained the weightlifting leaders award, two have gained key skills qualifications and 30 have completed the level 1 NVQ in sport and recreation. The level 2 NVQ is a new programme, and no learners have yet completed the qualification. Offenders attending the prison induction gain a manual handling certificate, and 573 certificates have been gained in the previous year. These certificates will not be awarded on future courses due to changes in course requirements. Some learners who completed the PE course are able to remain in the gymnasium as gym orderlies. They are able to practise the skills they gained on the course through supervising and leading in some coaching sessions and cleaning duties. The achievement rates for PE learners are satisfactory.

The quality of provision

77. Good progression routes to industry-recognised and valued qualifications are available to PE learners. A structured programme is in place allowing progress from personal achievement certificates to the level 2 NVQ. Many of the learners aspire to obtain this qualification. Learners progress through a range of coaching qualifications which effectively develop their skills. The programme has been developed to reflect the offenders' length of stay at the prison. Unit accreditation is used for learners who are transferred to other establishments and are unable to complete their NVQ. The numbers able to access the course are good in relation to the prison population. The retention rate on the PE programme is good. Of those offenders who started the course, just one has left early.

78. Teaching in PE is satisfactory, with a range of teaching methods being used. Satisfactory schemes of work and lesson plans are used on PE courses. Learners are well motivated and fully engaged in their lessons. They have a good working relationship with staff, from whom they receive good formal and informal support. Learners receive verbal and written feedback after each assessed session as well as a weekly grade indicating their performance and effort for that week. Learners are clear about how they are progressing.

79. The monitoring and recording of learners' training and progress is satisfactory. PE staff have informal systems to monitor learners' progress while they are on PE courses. Individual learning plans are not used to record learners' objectives, progress and learning outcomes. Learners do have access to their plans, but the plans do not have clear or measurable targets on them and are not regularly updated. Learners have three reviews during the PE course to check on progress and improvements needed, and checks on portfolio progress are also made at these points.

80. PE learners receive no support for literacy, numeracy and language skills. PE staff do not have qualifications or experience in this area. They may identify support needs but no systematic approach is in place for gaining the support required by learners. One learner was identified by PE staff as having support needs and was referred to the education department. The learner did not turn up for the support sessions but the PE department was not informed of this so no follow-up action was taken by staff. Opportunities to accredit the learners' key skills in communication and improving their own performance are not taken. There is little understanding of how each department could work together to support learners.

Leadership and management

81. Resources in PE are also satisfactory. The sports hall is small and offenders' access to the cardiovascular suite is limited. Weight training takes place in the sports hall and is restricted by other sports programmes for this area, and by weights being stored under the staged area. Staff have a positive attitude to these resources. They deliver a full recreational programme, inductions and short courses. The department is fully staffed but has one sports and games officer instead of a PE officer. In the prison library, few textbooks or trade publications are available to support PE learners. The classroom accommodation is suitably equipped for the courses delivered. One member of staff is currently working towards an assessors' award, but is making very slow progress.

82. Staff have insufficient knowledge and understanding of quality improvement systems. No formal lesson observations take place to support quality improvement. There is no formal plan or system currently in place for lesson observations. No overview of the quality of teaching is available within the PE department. Meetings take place on a regular basis but these are poorly recorded and do not identify actions to be completed. Feedback and review systems for learners are new and have not yet been evaluated. There is little individual target-setting for learners. Internal verification is incomplete. Actions identified on the previous two external verifiers' action plans have not been completed. There is no internal verification sampling plan and there are no standardisation activities. PE staff have insufficient knowledge and understanding of how this can be achieved. There has been no sharing of good practice from other areas of the establishment.

83. A review of the previous PE programme took place at the end of 2005. Changes have been made but they have not had time to become consolidated yet. No full evaluation of the PE programme has taken place. Learners' feedback and some staff evaluation of courses has taken place. There has been little formal analysis of this information to support further improvements or to guide future course planning. Quality assurance measures in the PE department do not formally feed into the overall learning and skills quality improvement system. Staff had some involvement in the development of the self-assessment report. Some of the strengths and weaknesses identified in the self-assessment report are inaccurate, and most of the strengths and weaknesses were not identified. The grading of the area of learning was accurate.

Preparation for life and work**Grade 3**

Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
<i>Literacy and numeracy</i>		3
Other government-funded provision	107	3

84. There are 89 learners on a range of preparation for life and work programmes that include literacy and numeracy, social and life skills, and visual arts. A further 18 learners are on ESOL programmes. Literacy and numeracy classes are provided from entry level to level 2. Thirty-four learners are taking key skills qualifications, five at level 3. There is a full-time education manager and one other full-time tutor, one part-time tutor and 12 sessional tutors. Currently there is one vacancy for a sessional ESOL tutor. Two learners have been identified as having the necessary prior learning and skills to offer support as learning support assistants. Most classes take place during daytime sessions, although some open learning and visual arts sessions are offered on two evenings a week. Support is offered to 54 learners on an individual basis in the workshops. No literacy and numeracy support is offered on the wings, but a step-by-step support programme for dyslexic learners has limited availability on the wings.

Literacy and numeracy*Strengths*

- good progress in literacy, numeracy, communication, social and life skills
- high standards of work in visual arts

Weaknesses

- insufficient progress reviews
- some inadequate and inappropriate resources

Achievement and standards

85. Achievement on literacy and numeracy programmes is satisfactory. Over 60 per cent of those starting the course achieve the accredited outcomes at a level higher than the starting point identified at initial assessment. Of the 71 learners who started literacy and numeracy courses in the past 12 months, 40 have achieved a full qualification and three have achieved units of a qualification. The remaining learners are still in learning. The achievement rate on the ESOL programme is good, with 70 per cent of learners gaining a qualification. Much of the key skills portfolio work is impressive, with learners able to complete detailed projects within agreed time limits. The presentations made by learners at the end of their project are of a high standard. Most learners continue to progress onto other programmes in education or into the workshops.

86. Learners following the visual arts course achieve very high standards. The content of the programme is well matched to learners' needs and tutors are effectively able to extend learners' abilities to create good work. Work is done in a wide variety of media including three-dimensional work. Learners are able to talk informatively about their work and how

they have achieved understanding of the different aspects of visual art. In the current group of nine learners, 11 pieces of work have been submitted for a national annual art award for offenders.

87. Most learners make good progress in their literacy, numeracy and communication skills. In one key skills class where each learner made a presentation to the group, the following peer evaluation was conducted in both a critical and supportive manner.

88. A few learners are achieving marked success in learning to read for the first time in their life. A step-by-step reading programme, designed to support dyslexic students, is used to good effect to support learners. Where this programme is promoted, learners receive regular tutoring from the learning support assistants and this is particularly effective in monitoring progress and offering encouragement.

89. There are many articulate learners taking part in preparation for life and work programmes. During a social and life skills programme looking at prejudice and discrimination, learners spoke with clarity and perception about their own experience and showed respect when listening to the views of others who came from different traditions and backgrounds.

The quality of provision

90. Most teaching on preparation for life and work programmes is good or better. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed. Although some course and lesson planning contains reference to differentiation, there is no consistent attempt to account for the wide variety of learners' individual needs and interests. Information gained from the preferred learning style analysis is not used to guide the design and delivery of foundation programmes. Lesson plans are completed for all sessions but these often carry insufficient information on how the individual needs of learners will be met. Lesson plans do not always differentiate between the activities to be carried out and the learning objectives to be achieved. All courses have appropriate accreditation.

91. Waiting lists are not long for all courses except ESOL, with most learners able to join the course identified at their initial assessment within a few weeks of entering the prison. Learners waiting to attend ESOL classes may have to wait up to two months.

92. Initial assessment is reliable in identifying offenders' prior learning, and appropriate starting points are agreed with each learner. Following the initial literacy and numeracy skills assessment which takes place at induction, learners take a diagnostic assessment when entering a programme in the education centre. Offenders also receive a preferred learning style assessment during their induction. However, the information from the diagnostic test and the learning-style assessment is not used to guide course planning, or to provide sufficient detail in individual learning plans. Data on learners' starting and completion of learning activities are effectively monitored and recorded, but this rarely includes comments relating to the assessment of the progress made by individual learners.

93. Where reviews do take place, they are effective in monitoring progress and planning future learning. In one review, a learner commented that the 'interaction among everyone was spot on'. The process for ensuring that all learners receive a systematic review has not been fully implemented.

94. The education department has an experienced and well-qualified workforce. The department maintains a strong commitment to continuing professional development, with many staff taking courses to update their professional skills and knowledge.

95. Two learning support assistants support the literacy, numeracy and social skills programmes. Potential learning support assistants are identified at initial assessment. They are selected if they have a good level of prior learning and if the prison does not offer programmes at an appropriately high level for them to follow. Those learners with the ability and aptitude to take on this role are not offered recognition in the form of additional remuneration or accredited training. Where learning support assistants are used in entry-level classes, learners benefit from the additional and timely support they offer. Learners were very positive about the benefits of the support they receive. This is particularly marked on the wings, where learners who may otherwise feel embarrassed about coming to the education centre are able to relate with confidence to the learning support assistants who deliver the dyslexia programme. There is no support from literacy, numeracy and communication tutors on the wings.

96. Tutors create a wide range of good-quality paper-based resources to support the delivery of their curriculum area. A suitable range of relevant materials for photocopy is available to support learning. Too few examples of learners' achievements in literacy, numeracy and communication are displayed either within classrooms or along the corridors. There is little evidence that the achievements of learners are valued and celebrated.

97. Overall resources are inadequate to support learners with literacy, numeracy and communication needs and those working on the visual arts course. Some learners are using literacy texts aimed at primary school-age pupils and there are no classroom-based computers other than those in the two computer rooms. Two laptop computers are used to provide additional resources for IT. The accommodation to support learners in visual arts is inadequate. Teaching takes place in a classroom where a sink and a workbench have been added. Learners do not have enough space or facilities to work in a wider range of media. There are no facilities for working with ceramics. Despite the lack of resources, good work is produced in visual arts. This weakness of inadequate physical resources has been identified by the prison.

Leadership and management

98. Management of preparation for life and work programmes is satisfactory. Course reviews are regularly analysed, but the course reviews are not sufficiently rigorous in identifying where management action is needed. Internal verification is satisfactory.

99. Managers have listened carefully to what learners think about the provision and have, on occasion, taken steps to meet their requirements.

100. The 2004-05 self-assessment report, the first one completed by the prison, is insufficiently rigorous and accurate. It uses an insufficient breadth of evidence to provide a clear and accurate analysis of how well the department has performed over the previous year. Some of the identified weaknesses are not matched by appropriate actions in the accompanying action plan.

101. The scheme for the observation of teaching and learning is not sufficiently rigorous or

accurate. All full- and part-time staff are observed each year but the resulting profile of teaching and learning does not match that found on inspection. Although some peer observation has taken place, there is no systematic strategy to identify good practice and share it as part of the staff development programme.

Business administration and law**Grade 3**

Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Administration		3
Other government-funded provision	14	3

102. Fourteen learners are working towards the Firm Start qualification for individuals who are interested in running their own business or considering self-employment as a career option. National accreditation is available at levels 1 to 3 and requires completion of five units, including financial planning, marketing and legislation. At levels 2 and 3, all learners must complete a business plan. Assessment is through the successful completion of a portfolio. In addition, 12 of the learners are taking a computerised accounts course. Currently no learners are working towards key skills qualifications.

103. Learners are assessed for their previous experience and knowledge by discussion before starting a course. In addition, learners must have literacy or numeracy skills at, or above, level 1.

104. Learners attend classes every weekday morning. Group size is a maximum of 14 learners. The computerised accounts course is available on Wednesday morning. There is no weekend provision. Teaching is done by two part-time tutors and managed by a part-time co-ordinator/tutor. Internal verification is carried out by the key skills co-ordinator.

Administration*Strengths*

- good achievement rates on the level 2 course in starting a business
- good development of practical business skills

Weaknesses

- inadequate research facilities to allow learners to test the viability of potential business opportunities
- slow implementation of improvements to assessment processes

Achievement and standards

105. Unit achievement rates are good on the level 2 Firm Start course. Between May and December 2005, the achievement rate was 80 per cent. In the same period, two-thirds of learners achieved a level 1 accounts qualification. They confidently use the software application to produce work of a satisfactory standard. Current learners on all courses are making satisfactory or better progress. Learners' portfolios contain a suitable range of evidence of a satisfactory or better standard. Retention rates for both courses are satisfactory, as are attendance rates. Both attendance and punctuality are satisfactorily monitored. Of the 36 learners who have started courses in the past 12 months, 14 are still in learning and 13 have achieved a full qualification.

106. Learners develop good practical business skills. They are able to confidently use business terminology and concepts in group and individual discussion. Learners can apply their skills critically to evaluate the potential effectiveness of proposed business strategies. They are good at applying business theory to explore the viability of proposed business ventures. As a result, many have modified their initial plans to take account of the more realistic evaluation of proposed business ventures. In one case, a learner was able to analyse why his previous attempts to start a business had failed and identify what he would need to do differently next time. Learners are able to apply their newly acquired knowledge to a wide range of potential occupational situations. They develop good working relationships with colleagues and can work well independently or collaboratively. Learners' confidence in dealing with new tasks is effectively enhanced.

The quality of provision

107. The quality of teaching is satisfactory or better. Tutors are suitably qualified and experienced. Lessons plans are clear and concise. Most learners receive good individual attention. Tutors have a good knowledge of learners' abilities and interests. In the better teaching, tutors use a good range of teaching techniques to engage learners' interest and cater for their learning style. Learners have an adequate understanding of when and how they will be assessed. They receive suitably detailed feedback following assessment. Feedback on progress is satisfactory and in some cases well focused to motivate learners. The effectiveness of target-setting for learners is inconsistent, but generally satisfactory. It is appropriately used to guide learners' actions and for monitoring of their progress. Most learners have an appropriate understanding of how well they are progressing. Not all learners know how to appeal if they do not agree with an assessment decision. Teaching is satisfactory. The teaching style used in observed sessions was insufficiently stimulating. Tutors make insufficient use of question-and-answer techniques to test learners' knowledge and reinforce understanding. Handouts and worksheets are usually laid out well and are appropriate for the level of learner. However, some are poorly reproduced or have not been updated for some time. In some cases, no reference is made to the most recent European or UK business legislation. The expectation is that learners will have literacy or numeracy skills at, or above, level 1 before commencing the programme. During inspection, no learners were receiving additional literacy or numeracy skills support. Referral arrangements to support learners who have a need for specialist help are well understood by tutors. Induction arrangements are satisfactory.

110. The learning environment is satisfactory. Classrooms are clean and satisfactorily furnished. Some furniture is old but is fit for its purpose. The prison's accommodation strategy appropriately includes the improvement of the furniture. Tutors have access to a satisfactory range of teaching aids and equipment for use in class. Most classrooms have suitable displays of subject-specific information. However, very limited use is made of displays to celebrate the quality and range of learners' work. Some whiteboards are not properly cleaned. Learners have a satisfactory amount of space to carry out most classroom tasks. However, opportunities for learners to effectively experience working in pairs and groups are limited by the available space in the classrooms. Some classes can be disturbed by noise from the adjacent corridor. Learners have inadequate computers facilities to word process their assignments or practise their ICT skills.

111. Research facilities to allow learners to test the viability of their potential business opportunities are inadequate. The programme focuses on the practical application of business concepts to develop the learners' proposed business ideas. Arrangements for

personal research are inadequate. Library facilities do not effectively provide the range of data, information and facilities needed by learners. Within classrooms, learners do not have access to an adequate range of current business directories, information sources and specialist advice. They are unable to carry out searches on the internet for relevant information. Tutors supplement the available information with items they have downloaded from the internet. However, this process does not adequately meet the timely needs of learners. Many learners wish to be self-employed in another country. The inadequate international research facilities hinder them in making realistic decisions on the viability of such an action. The education department recognises this weakness in its self-assessment report. Actions to improve the provision of research facilities are limited by regime restrictions.

Leadership and management

112. Management of administration programmes is satisfactory. Informal communication is good. Formal communication is regular and usually results in a detailed written record of agreed outcomes for action. However, the actions are not always adequately time-bound or prioritised. Staff members' training needs are appropriately identified and staff are suitably supported to develop their professional and vocational skills. A staff learning plan is produced that includes all the identified training and development needs of staff. An appropriate range of internal and external courses is attended by staff. All staff can also apply for additional training at anytime of the year.

113. The promotion and monitoring of equality of opportunity is satisfactory. All learners have a satisfactory understanding of their rights and responsibilities. The education department adequately covers equality and diversity issues at induction. Tutors effectively monitor class activity for oppressive behaviour. Learners have an appropriate appreciation of how the prison rules and law can protect them during their training. Learners know how to raise any concerns by formal or informal means. Most issues are suitably resolved by informal methods. Few formal complaints have been logged with the education department. Action as a result of such complaints has been timely and effective. Access to the training room is unsatisfactory for learners with restricted mobility. However, the prison has a policy of not taking individuals who have restricted mobility.

114. Quality improvement arrangements are satisfactory. All staff are subject to a satisfactory annual monitoring of the quality of their teaching, by peer observation. Helpful written feedback is given that includes action points for improvement. Learners' feedback is collected and used satisfactorily to improve the programme. Programme reviews effectively identify many actions for improvement. However, they do not effectively ensure the implementation of strategies to improve retention and achievement rates. A range of data and targets are set but are not effectively used as part of a strategy to bring about changes that include quality improvement. Staff were not adequately involved in contributing to the most recent self-assessment report. The action plan does not adequately cover all the key weaknesses identified at inspection.

115. The education department has recently introduced new monitoring documents and processes to improve assessment and internal verification. While the programme meets the awarding body's standards, the implementation of other improvements to assessment processes has been slow. At the time of inspection, the prison had not implemented a written procedure that included guidance on ensuring an effective sampling strategy. All assessors receive detailed written feedback as part of the quality improvement process.

Informal meetings are held to discuss assessment issues. However, they are not used to appropriately share good practice. The outcomes of meetings are not recorded. The process to observe and check assessment, before learners claim unit achievement, is not fully implemented.

