

INSPECTION REPORT

PETA Limited

27 October 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
- **learndirect** 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*

INSPECTION REPORT

PETA Limited

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INSPECTION REPORT

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROVIDER

1. PETA Limited (PETA) was founded by local manufacturing companies in 1970 as Portsmouth Engineering Training Association. In 1982, it became a company limited by guarantee which is also a registered charity. Its initial range of provision has been extended to include corporate training and consultancy to a wide range of public and private sector clients. It provides government-funded work-based learning in the form of apprenticeships and preparation for employment.

2. An executive director manages the company, and it employs 71 people in two operating divisions. The division responsible for government-funded work-based learning is run by a scheme manager and has 38 staff who provide training for 304 learners. PETA has three vocational training centres at Havant, Portsmouth and Winchester. Training is funded by the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Learning and Skills Council (LSC).

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS

Grade 2

3. **The overall effectiveness of the provision is good.** Its arrangements for quality improvement are satisfactory. Training in preparation for life and work, and business administration and law is good. Training in engineering and manufacturing technologies is satisfactory.

4. **The inspection team was broadly confident in the reliability of the self-assessment process.** The self-assessment process is very inclusive and is an integral part of PETA's continuous improvement strategy. PETA has made good use of self-assessment to help it to deal with some of the areas for improvement identified at the previous inspection in December 2001. The self-assessment report is an active document and is kept under regular review.

5. **The provider has demonstrated that it has sufficient capacity to make improvements.** There is a strong commitment to continuous improvement by staff across the whole organisation. PETA recognises that its quality improvement arrangements, although very effective in monitoring policies and procedures, do not necessarily lead to improvements. Quality improvement is a standard agenda item at managerial, staff and departmental meetings. PETA has produced a risk management and preventive action chart which it is using to monitor the progress of its continuous improvement process.

KEY CHALLENGES FOR PETA LIMITED:

- improve internal verification in engineering
- continue to improve retention and achievement rates
- maintain the good level of strategic management
- extend the sharing of good practice

- maintain the effective promotion of equality and diversity
- improve the number of direct observations of teaching and learning, and their rigour

GRADES

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

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

Engineering and manufacturing technologies			3
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade	
<i>Engineering</i> Apprenticeships for young people	102	3	3

Preparation for life and work			2
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade	
<i>Employability training</i> Entry to Employment	157	2	2

Business administration and law			2
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade	
<i>Administration</i> Apprenticeships for young people	45	2	2

ABOUT THE INSPECTION

6. The inspection reported on and graded PETA's provision in engineering, preparation for work and business administration. There were too few learners in information and communications technology (ICT) and retailing to report on and grade these areas of learning.

Number of inspectors	7
Number of inspection days	28
Number of learners interviewed	74
Number of staff interviewed	30
Number of employers interviewed	20
Number of locations/sites/learning centres visited	6
Number of partners/external agencies interviewed	4
Number of visits	2

KEY FINDINGS

Achievements and standards

7. **There is good achievement of key skills in the early stages of programmes in all subject areas.** PETA uses online assessment very effectively and the current initial success rate exceeds 90 per cent in engineering and 70 per cent in business administration.

8. **The integration of key skills training with engineering training in the centre is good,** and since the previous inspection its integration with work-based learning has improved. Learners on the Entry to Employment (E2E) programme produce good-quality key skills projects based on business administration topics.

9. **Business administration learners gain good vocational skills in the workplace** and quickly make significant contributions to their employers' business. Learners' skills are valued by employers and meet their standards. Some learners often work on their own initiative and in some cases they make an exceptional contribution.

10. **Learners in engineering quickly become proficient in the workplace** and many progress to roles of responsibility. Learners can deal confidently with complex tasks. Most learners on the engineering apprenticeship programme progress to the advanced apprenticeship programme after achieving an NVQ at level 2.

11. There is **good attainment of additional qualifications by engineering learners.** Some learners are studying at higher national level while still on the advanced apprenticeship programmes. Many gain additional vocational qualifications in topics such as slinging and lifting, operating lift trucks, health and safety, working in confined spaces, and modern manufacturing techniques.

12. The achievement and retention rates for young people on apprenticeships in engineering are generally satisfactory. At the previous inspection in 2001, the retention rate for learners on foundation modern apprenticeships was poor. Since then PETA has taken a number of actions to improve retention rates in this group of learners, and there has been a steady increase in the number remaining in learning. However, **the retention rate for learners who started advanced apprenticeships in 2001-02 has been poor.**

13. Retention rates on business administration apprenticeships are satisfactory. All the apprentices who started in 2004 are still in learning. Framework completion rates are satisfactory.

14. Business administration learners are well motivated. They maintain well-structured portfolios of evidence for national vocational qualification (NVQ) assessment. There is good progression from the business administration taster course to the apprenticeship framework. Currently 62 per cent of new learners starting apprenticeships have transferred from the taster programmes.

15. Learners on the E2E programme produce satisfactory work and gain certificates in a range of subjects, including computer literacy, entry-level literacy and numeracy, and key skills in communications and application of number. Some learners also achieve certificates in food hygiene and health and safety.

16. Since the start of the programme in 2002-03 nearly 400 E2E learners, a third of the total, have progressed into employment or further education or training. Thirty-four per cent have achieved the learning outcomes identified in their E2E passport.

The quality of provision

Grades given to learning sessions

	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Total
Engineering and manufacturing technologies	0	1	4	0	5
Preparation for life and work	1	7	3	2	13
Business administration and law	0	3	1	0	4
Total	1	11	8	2	22

17. The induction programme in business administration is comprehensive and well structured. Learners clearly recall its content. Staff give health and safety a high priority. They cover equality of opportunity well and in some detail, giving good examples of different aspects of grievances, discipline, bullying and harassment.

18. **Key skills training for business administration learners is particularly good** and is provided at an early stage in the programmes. At induction, learners are given clear guidance on the importance of key skills training and the way in which it is integrated with their vocational studies.

19. **The E2E programme is particularly flexible and responsive.** Trainers respond to learners' requests, where practical, and are highly sensitive to their needs. The programme is particularly effective in preparing learners for employment. It specifically takes into account the different stages learners go through in preparation for employment, concentrating on life skills, and literacy and numeracy in the early weeks.

20. **Learners in all areas of learning benefit greatly from work placements** during their programme. E2E learners have access to an excellent range of work placements, with over a hundred employers to choose from. Their placements can range from one day to eight weeks.

21. Engineering learners, particularly during the second and third year of the advanced apprenticeship, gain experience of an extensive variety of work through placements in various departments at their workplace. At the end of each placement, they must study and report on an assignment or project. These are validated by the training officer and learners use them as evidence for their NVQ.

22. Most business administration learners have work placements that enable them to develop new skills and meet the need of the apprenticeship framework. PETA has well-established links with a wide variety of business organisations that provide an extensive range of placements for learners. Employers include financial organisations, the health service, local authorities, small and medium-sized engineering firms and the hospitality sector.

23. **Engineering learners are well supported** both in their vocational development and pastorally. Training officers visit learners every four to six weeks. These visits are often outside normal working hours to meet learners' needs and working patterns, and can be early in the morning, during the late evening or at weekends. Learners who have experienced severe health or personal difficulties have been given extra coaching, sometimes at the homes of the training officers.

24. Pastoral care for E2E learners is good. PETA places considerable emphasis on pastoral care because it considers it to be vital in enabling learners to progress. All learners are allocated a mentor who guides and supports them. The E2E staff have well-developed skills in supporting young people with additional personal needs. They are very experienced in dealing with learners who have low self-esteem, poor interpersonal skills, learning difficulties and whose behaviour is sometimes challenging.

25. Staff deal confidently with a number of problems affecting E2E learners, including learning difficulties and personal and social issues such as homelessness, substance misuse and low self-esteem. One of the key objectives of the programme is to develop learners' confidence and self-esteem. PETA devotes significant time and effort to these personal issues before learners are ready to progress and to focus on their learning.

26. **Support for business administration learners is particularly good** both on and off the job. At recruitment and before joining the programme, learners have a very thorough in-depth interview. Learners are given clear advice on the possible vocational training and career options PETA offers. Where specific action is needed to support the learner, this is taken quickly and effectively. PETA has good links to specialist support services such as Connexions, which it uses well to the benefit of learners. PETA makes every effort to ensure that all learners are placed on programmes that match their background skills and interests.

27. **Learners in business administration have very thorough progress reviews** that are used very effectively to identify issues that may affect learning. The reviews are used very

successfully to monitor progress, set short-term targets and check learners' knowledge and understanding of health and safety and equality of opportunity.

28. At the inspection in 2001, insufficient target-setting in learners' progress reviews was identified as a weakness in engineering. Since then, PETA has introduced new procedures, and the target-setting in learners' progress reviews has improved. The reviews are now comprehensive with challenging but realistic targets being set after negotiation and discussion between the learner and reviewer. Learners demonstrate a good understanding of health and safety.

29. Each E2E centre provides a good range of enrichment activities including visiting speakers from a variety of agencies, trips to leisure facilities and an overnight camping experience, which instils team-building skills. PETA has been involved in a government pilot of an innovative personal development scheme, and runs a short course in creative strategies to build self-esteem. PETA celebrates E2E learners' success in non-accredited learning, and their gains in confidence and life skills, through an awards scheme and in folders of success stories at each centre.

30. **E2E learners receive good advice and guidance in preparation for work.** Staff ensure that learners are actively searching for jobs, for example in taught job preparation sessions and through practical assignments. Staff prepare learners for the world of work through the induction and review processes. They encourage them to assume some personal responsibility by getting them to participate actively in standard workplace procedures such as absence notification, holiday bookings and bonus schemes. Staff work closely with Connexions advisers to provide learners with effective practical support and prepare them for the workplace.

31. PETA's engineering staff have good vocational knowledge and a particularly wide range of experience in engineering. Most staff have suitable qualifications in teaching, or have attended vocational instructor training courses and are studying for teaching and assessor qualifications. Off-the-job teaching is satisfactory. Tutors make good use of comprehensive lesson plans and schemes of work. They are enthusiastic and committed and are able to motivate learners.

32. Teaching and learning in E2E are satisfactory, with 85 per cent of the lessons observed being satisfactory or better. In the better sessions learners enjoy a wide range of stimulating activities directly related to real life. For instance, in one lively session, learners developed their awareness of health and safety issues through conducting internet searches. They also made imaginative use of computer-aided drawing tools to illustrate the use of safety equipment in the training environment. In some weaker sessions tutors place insufficient emphasis on the acquisition of skills, and concentrate more on a finished product or an accreditation aim.

33. **Off-the-job teaching, training and learning are particularly good on the business administration taster courses.** Learners make good use of the excellent opportunities they are given to display and develop skills, whatever their previous experience. Learners enjoy developing the confidence to use their new skills and to transfer to full apprenticeships.

34. Initial assessment of engineering learners is satisfactory. The initial assessment includes aptitude tests and a key skills analysis, and there are satisfactory arrangements for the

accreditation of any prior qualifications. However, there is no screening test to identify learners who may benefit from specialist additional learning support in literacy, numeracy or language. When a learner is identified as requiring additional support, PETA responds effectively. Resources are available to provide additional support in literacy and numeracy.

35. E2E trainers use a satisfactory range of initial assessment tools. These include analysis of learning styles and literacy and numeracy initial and diagnostic assessment. Trainers do not, however, make adequate use of the results of learning styles assessment. They pay insufficient attention to individual learners' specific literacy and numeracy needs when planning activities in some subject areas. **Target-setting in E2E is poor**, with some targets set in literacy and numeracy targets expressed in language and terms that many learners find too difficult to understand.

36. PETA identified a requirement for additional support for E2E learners in literacy and numeracy at entry levels 1 and 2. A basic skills tutor has recently been appointed, who spends an equal amount of time in each centre teaching both group sessions and individual identified learners. Early indications are that this are proving effective in improving learners' literacy and numeracy.

37. In engineering, there is **insufficient direct observation by qualified assessors** and extensive use is made of portfolios as evidence of competence. Portfolios are generally well compiled and comprehensive with a good range of evidence such as job write ups, task sheets, specifications and drawings. Digital photographic evidence is used well in portfolios.

38. **There is too little internal verification of engineering assessment in the workplace.** Inadequate planning of internal verification was identified as a weakness by the previous inspection. There is little evidence of a structured approach to assessment sampling. Internal verification is mainly portfolio based and is carried out towards the end of the programme.

39. **In business administration there is insufficient analysis of the data collected during initial assessment.** PETA collects a large amount of useful data but does not use it effectively in initial assessment.

Leadership and management

40. **The strategic management of PETA's work-based learning is good** with a clear focus on the development of the key core activity of work-based learning. Senior staff have a very good understanding of the government's skills strategy and in particular its effect on the regional and local skills agenda.

41. PETA has developed **very good management information systems** which it uses well in controlling programmes. Managers and staff receive a variety of reports with accurate information, often in easily interpreted pictorial formats, to keep them informed of the progress of programmes and learners. The information provided also helps managers to forecast accurately their resource requirements.

42. **Operational management of the business administration programmes is good.** Programmes are well organised. The supervisors directly involved with work-based learning

on employers' premises are used very effectively.

43. Off-site learning is well matched to job roles and employers' and learners' needs. Regular staff team meetings are held to share information and plan training. Staff make good use of central management information in programme planning and management.

44. **The E2E programmes are well managed**, and there is very effective teamwork and collaboration between the three centres. Managers and staff communicate well with each other and with learners. Regular team meetings complement more informal sharing of opinions, concerns and ideas. E2E staff are highly committed to the programme. Staff feel that they are valued, and that they can contribute to the decision-making process throughout the company.

45. The good operational management of programmes is greatly assisted by **good internal communications**. Staff at all levels within the company know exactly what their roles and responsibilities are. Regular and frequent meetings of teams and working parties contribute to a good shared understanding by all staff of PETA's mission and purpose. Staff have access to good, relevant information through the regular staff briefing sheet, monthly management reports, financial breakdown reports, e-mails and newsletters.

46. **PETA's strong partnerships with employers and the wider community** were identified as a strength at the previous inspection and continue to be an important part of the company's strategy for improving work-based learning. The company makes particularly good use of its employer and commercial links as a source of information. PETA has excellent, well-established, co-operative working arrangements with local schools. For example, it provides school taster days that encourage young people to discover first-hand what engineering can offer by experiencing practical activities and carrying out assignments in the workshop.

47. PETA provides good staff development opportunities. The staff development process is comprehensive and effective. The members of the management team have clear responsibilities for staff development and for carrying out regular staff appraisals. Staff are well motivated and speak highly of the opportunities they get to improve their performance to the benefit of learners. The staff induction programme is effective in enabling new staff to understand their roles and responsibilities and the company's policies and procedures, and in helping to engender a strong sense of common purpose to serve the best interest of the learner.

48. The company provides **good training in equality of opportunity**. The manager who has key responsibility for equality of opportunity and diversity has received very good training leading to an appropriate qualification in equality and diversity. PETA has an equality of opportunity and diversity focus group which has very clear terms of reference. It is made up of staff representatives from each department who meet regularly to share information. Equality and diversity training features clearly in the business plan. Senior managers have ensured all staff have a basic understanding and that they are updated through good specific training events. Managers used the feedback from a staff survey to plan appropriate training.

49. **PETA is particularly effective at promoting equality of opportunity**, and covers the topic well during learners' induction. The policy and procedures are satisfactory, and staff

go through them carefully with the learners. They pass on information about the anti-harassment, anti-bullying and grievance procedures. The review process includes a good range of questions that reviewers choose from to test learners' understanding.

50. PETA has maintained the detailed quality assurance arrangements that were identified as a strength at the previous inspection. These arrangements, based on an international quality assurance standard, include detailed and comprehensive planning, policies, procedures, working instructions, forms and records manuals, which help PETA to monitor its compliance with the operating procedures. PETA systematically audits each of its procedures and working instructions against an annual audit plan. However, **quality assurance has not brought about consistent improvements in some key areas**, particularly internal verification and engineering retention, which remain unsatisfactory.

51. Since the previous inspection, PETA has developed its use of surveys of learners' and employers' views to provide valuable information and contribute to the improvement of its provision. All the staff have a strong commitment to continuous improvement. Quality improvement is a standard agenda item at managerial, staff and departmental meetings. PETA has produced a risk management and preventive action chart which it is using to monitor the development of the continuous improvement process.

52. The self-assessment process is very inclusive and is now an integral part of PETA's continuous improvement strategy. Staff are consulted fully and are actively involved in the drafting and revision of the self-assessment report. They make valuable contributions to self-assessment judgements and work closely with managers and colleagues across all departments as well as assessing their own department's strengths and weaknesses. PETA has continued to work on linking business planning to self-assessment in order to bring greater cohesion to action-planning. Managers have made good use of self-assessment in dealing with some of the areas for improvement identified at the previous inspection.

53. PETA's management of literacy, numeracy and language support for learners is satisfactory in the E2E and business administration programmes. During initial assessment, staff use diagnostic tests to identify learners' literacy and numeracy skills. Where additional training needs are identified, specialist basic skills support is provided by a tutor. The arrangements for this additional support have only recently been established.

54. The maintenance of high standards of health and safety is given a high priority in all areas of learning. Comprehensive risk assessments are carried out and safety checks are regularly audited.

55. There is comfortable and reasonably spacious accommodation at each centre and sufficient modern ICT and multimedia equipment. Classrooms are well equipped with a good range of modern audiovisual training aids. Furniture and teaching resources are good for the size of groups attending. In engineering there is a good range of workshop equipment. At Havant in particular, learners benefit from good private study facilities and a small rest room for breaks.

56. Since the previous inspection PETA has relocated to three main sites. These were decided upon after careful consideration of the ease of transport for learners. PETA has not conducted an audit of premises or produced an action plan in accordance with the requirements of the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001. Premises are not

easily accessible for learners with restricted mobility. However, PETA has made appropriate arrangements and provided good support for learners with range of disabilities including restricted mobility. A mezzanine floor with a lift is being built at the Havant Centre.

Leadership and management

Strengths

- good strategic management of work-based learning
- very effective use of management information
- good internal communications
- strong partnerships with external agencies
- good staff training in equality of opportunity and diversity
- particularly effective promotion of equality and diversity

Weaknesses

- incomplete quality improvement arrangements

Engineering and manufacturing technologies

Engineering

Grade 3

Strengths

- good acquisition of skills in the workplace
- good attainment of additional qualifications
- good work placements which are matched well to learners' abilities
- highly effective support for learners

Weaknesses

- poor retention rate on advanced apprenticeships among learners who started in 2001-02
- insufficient observed assessment in the workplace
- insufficient internal verification in the workplace

Preparation for life and work

Employability training

Grade 2

Strengths

- particularly flexible and responsive programme
- good advice and guidance preparing learners for work
- good pastoral care for learners
- very good work placements

- good operational management

Weaknesses

- some poor target-setting

Business administration and law

Administration

Grade 2

Strengths

- particularly good key skills training
- thorough reviews of learners' progress
- particularly good support for learners
- very good pre-apprenticeship taster programme
- good operational management

Weaknesses

- insufficient analysis of initial assessment data

WHAT LEARNERS LIKE ABOUT PETA LIMITED:

- the good working environment
- the professional and friendly lecturers and trainers - 'helped me gain confidence and qualifications'
- the well-organised training - 'they got me an apprenticeship'
- 'the support I get during training' - 'they try their best to keep you on course'
- learning new skills
- the balance of practical and background knowledge training - 'a good mix of both'
- getting paid to learn
- getting help with travel costs
- the freedom to learn for yourself but being supported as well
- the key skills instruction
- being treated fairly - 'discipline is fair'
- learning to cook

WHAT LEARNERS THINK PETA LIMITED COULD IMPROVE:

- the recreation facilities at Portsmouth - 'provide a common room'
- the quantity of tools available in the machine workshops
- the workshop environment in Havant - 'music in the machine room'
- the number of similar assignments in business administration - 'too many repetitive assignments'
- the availability of a drinking water point at Portsmouth
- the accessibility at Portsmouth - 'too many stairs'
- the amount of time learning on E2E - 'more course hours'
- the pattern of attendance on E2E - 'more varied hours not all mornings or all afternoons'
- the timing of the start of day release for the engineering technical certificate

DETAILED INSPECTION FINDINGS

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Grade 2

Strengths

- good strategic management of work-based learning
- very effective use of management information
- good internal communications
- strong partnerships with external agencies
- good staff training in equality of opportunity and diversity
- particularly effective promotion of equality and diversity

Weaknesses

- incomplete quality improvement arrangements

57. The strong commitment of PETA's chief executive, chairman and council members ensures that the strategic management of work-based learning is good. The business plan is succinct and realistic with a clear focus on the development of the key core activity of work-based learning. Senior staff have a very good understanding of the government's skills strategy and in particular its effect on the regional and local skills agenda. Managers have focused on key issues and resisted diversifying into vocational areas where PETA does not have particular expertise or experience. PETA exercises prudent and effective financial management to ensure the viability and future growth of its work-based programmes. Senior managers conduct good risk assessments of all the factors that affect programmes before implementing changes. One example is its careful selection of the best locations for its training centres, to meet the needs of learners on the E2E programme. Another was the decision to transfer the engineering training from its former modest and dowdy accommodation to its new modern facilities in Havant.

58. PETA has developed very good management information systems which it uses well in controlling programmes. Accurate information is readily available to managers to enable them to monitor targets and key performance indicators effectively and to support decision-making. Managers and staff receive a variety of reports, many in easily interpreted pictorial formats, to keep them informed of the progress of programmes and learners. The information provided also helps managers to forecast accurately their resource requirements. PETA is evaluating new progress monitoring software.

59. The good operational management of programmes is greatly assisted by good internal communications. Staff at all levels in the company are clear about their roles and responsibilities. They have a good understanding of the objectives they are working towards in their teams and departments. Staff are kept informed of how their department is performing and what improvements are needed. Frequent and regular team and working party meetings contribute to a good shared understanding by all staff of the PETA's mission and purpose. The quality and effectiveness of communication is a significant factor in the good team working evident at PETA. Staff have access to good, relevant information through the regular staff briefing sheet, monthly management reports, financial breakdown

reports, e-mails and newsletters. All staff are regularly given information on the training and development opportunities available to them.

60. PETA's very effective links with a wide range of external agencies in the wider community were identified as a strength at the previous inspection and continue to be an important part of the company's strategy for improving work-based learning. These links include active participation in collaborative marketing groups and education business partnerships to promote and develop work-based learning opportunities, particularly for disaffected learners and under-represented groups. PETA has continued to develop its strong, well-established partnerships with local employers, enabling them to work together for the benefit of learners. PETA has over 330 member companies and also works with a range of large and small employers. The company makes particularly good use of these commercial links as a source of information to help learners and develop its range of provision. PETA has excellent, well-established co-operative working arrangements with local schools. It provides school taster days to encourage young people to come and see what an engineering career can offer by experiencing practical activities and carrying out assignments in the workshop.

61. PETA provides good development opportunities to staff. The staff development process is comprehensive and effective. Members of the management team have clear responsibilities for staff development and for carrying out regular staff appraisals. Staff are encouraged to discuss their personal development needs and to improve their skills and knowledge. Individual training plans are reviewed throughout the year and changes made as necessary. In addition to this, all staff take part in training on topics such as equality of opportunity, health and safety, and quality improvement. The company holds the Investors in People award, a national standard for improving an organisation's performance through its people. PETA is firmly committed to Investors in People, and the company introduces it to staff at their induction and reinforces it with additional training. PETA makes a considerable financial investment in its staff development arrangements. Staff are well motivated and speak highly of the opportunities they get to improve their performance to the benefit of learners. The staff induction programme is effective in enabling new staff to understand their roles and responsibilities and the company's policies and procedures, and in helping to engender a strong sense of common purpose to serve the best interests of learners.

62. PETA's management of literacy, numeracy and language support for learners is satisfactory. During initial assessment, learners on the business administration and E2E programmes are given diagnostic tests to identify their literacy and numeracy skills. Where learners are identified as needing additional training, specialist basic skills support is provided by a tutor. The arrangements for this additional support have only recently been established.

Equality of opportunity

Contributory grade 2

63. The company provides good staff training in equality of opportunity. PETA's manager with key responsibility for equality of opportunity and diversity has received very good training leading to a highly appropriate external qualification in equality and diversity. PETA has an equality of opportunity and diversity focus group that meets regularly. It comprises staff representatives from each department who are designated dignity advisers and act as a useful point of contact for learners and other employees. Managers have outlined very

clear terms of reference for this group, and its members regularly pass on information about equality of opportunity to their respective teams. Equality and diversity training features clearly in the business plan. Managers used the feedback gained from a staff survey to plan appropriate training ensuring that all staff have a basic understanding and that they are kept up to date.

64. PETA is particularly effective at promoting equality of opportunity and it is covered well during learners' induction. Staff go through the policy and procedures carefully with learners, explaining the anti-harassment, anti-bullying and grievance procedures. The progress review procedure has been amended and now includes a good range of questions that reviewers can choose from to test learners' understanding. Most areas of learning staff use this new system well to reinforce knowledge the learners gained at induction.

65. The company produces a regular newsletter containing information about aspects of equality of opportunity. The most recent edition featured thought-provoking case studies relating to the sex discrimination act. PETA recently asked staff to come up with suggestions about how to improve provision for learners with disabilities.

66. At the previous inspection, PETA's arrangements for target-setting in the development of equality of opportunity were judged unsatisfactory. Since then the company has significantly improved its system for collecting information of equality and diversity. Managers use information effectively to monitor the performance of learners by ethnic grouping, disability and gender in each area of learning. Managers review the overall performance of the company, evaluating the statistics carefully against local information. Useful graphs are presented to senior staff in each department and appropriate targets are set. The percentage of PETA's learners from minority ethnic communities is slightly higher than that in the population of the area as a whole, but the percentages in the towns where the training centres are situated vary considerably. Managers use their detailed local knowledge to focus and direct efforts into those areas that are under-represented.

67. PETA uses its good links and networks with local agencies to break down stereotypical views. The company has continued to develop its excellent co-operative working arrangements with local schools, and other initiatives have included sessions directed specifically at getting women into engineering by introducing them to practical activities in the workshop. One marketing campaign to promote engineering training featured a successful female learner who worked for an alarm installation company. PETA continues to place a high priority on increasing participation by under-represented groups, and sets targets in its business plans for the representation of minority ethnic learners and learners with disabilities. The company has made progress towards meeting its equality and diversity targets, but managers believe there is still work to do and are directing significant time and effort into this.

68. Since the previous inspection PETA has relocated to three main sites. These were selected after careful consideration of how easily learners could get to them. However, PETA has not audited the premises or produced an action plan in accordance with the requirements of the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001, and the premises are not easily accessible for learners with restricted mobility. PETA has made appropriate alternative arrangements and provided good support for learners with range of disabilities including restricted mobility. Construction of a mezzanine floor with provision for a lift has begun at the premises in Havant.

Quality improvement**Contributory grade 3**

69. PETA has maintained the detailed quality improvement arrangements that were identified as a strength at the previous inspection. These arrangements, based on an international quality assurance standard, include comprehensive planning, policies, procedures, working instructions, and forms and records manuals, which help PETA to monitor its compliance with the operating procedures. PETA systematically audits each of its procedures and working instructions annually. There is a clear procedure for implementing any remedial actions, with a comprehensive plan allocating responsibilities and timescales. Auditors work across departments to help share good practice across the company. Managers continue to use the auditing system effectively to monitor most aspects of quality improvement.

70. PETA has recognised that its quality improvement arrangements, although very effective in monitoring policies and procedures, do not necessarily lead to improvements. It is in the process of developing and enhancing the quality improvement system and integrating it more closely with the management information system in order to increase its effectiveness. It has established a series of controls for identifying, through detailed analysis of its management information, the areas of its activities where timely preventive action would bring about quality improvements. Among the sources of information that PETA is now analysing more effectively are learner and employer surveys, programme reviews, achievement and retention data, awarding body reports, self-assessment and external audit reports. Since the previous inspection, PETA has developed its use of surveys of learners' and employers' views to provide valuable information and contribute to the improvement of its provision. There is a strong commitment by staff to continuous improvement across the whole organisation. Quality improvement is a standard agenda item at managerial, staff and departmental meetings. PETA has produced a risk management and preventive action chart which it is using to monitor the development of the continuous improvement process.

71. The self-assessment process is very inclusive and is an integral part of PETA's continuous improvement strategy. Staff are consulted fully and are actively involved in the drafting and revision of the report. They make valuable contributions to self-assessment judgements and work closely with managers and colleagues across all departments. PETA has continued to work on linking business planning to self-assessment in order to bring greater cohesion to action-planning. It has made good use of self-assessment to help it improve some of the weaker areas identified at the previous inspection. In business administration in particular, retention and achievement rates and learners' progress reviews have improved. The self-assessment report is kept under regular review. The most recent report was published in September 2005.

72. Although PETA has taken effective action to deal with most of the weaknesses identified at the previous inspection, some aspects of its provision are still unsatisfactory. Inspectors identified two areas in particular. Internal verification forms a major part of PETA's quality assurance strategy but in engineering it is not arranged rigorously or systematically enough. There is not enough observation of assessment in the workplace and there is little standardisation or sharing of good practice among assessors and verifiers. The arrangements for lesson observations are not sufficiently rigorous and do not effectively contribute to the continuing improvement of teaching or the development of inexperienced staff. The planning for lesson observations has recently been revised but it is

too soon to tell whether this has led to any significant improvements.

AREAS OF LEARNING

Engineering and manufacturing technologies

Grade 3

Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Engineering Apprenticeships for young people	102	3 3

73. PETA has 102 engineering learners of whom 58 are advanced apprentices and 44 are apprentices. Learners are recruited through PETA's regular contact with its member companies, schools' careers events, open evenings for teachers and careers advisers, and by local advertising. PETA also recruits engineering learners through its E2E arrangements and through close links with Connexions that include running engineering taster sessions. Before recruitment, learners undergo an aptitude test and assessments to determine their literacy and numeracy, and they then have an interview to discuss the results and evaluate their career options and preferences. PETA provides employers with a list of applicants and the results of their initial assessment tests. Employers interview and select learners for employment and training.

74. In the first year of training, learners attend a 24-week programme of practical skills training in PETA's training centre in Havant. This covers basic vocational skills in machining, fabrication and welding, and electrical engineering, and leads to an NVQ at level 2 in performing engineering operations. Learners also receive key skills training to level 2 during this time.

75. Towards the end of this section of the programme, some learners are employed part time for a minimum of one day a week. PETA finds employment for all learners who successfully complete the level 2 NVQ. On completion of the off-the-job training programme at PETA, advanced apprentices spend the remaining three years working with an employer, towards a level 3 NVQ in engineering. Employers range from small businesses to large international corporations engaged in various engineering, manufacturing and maintenance sectors including aerospace, air conditioning, tool-making, precision engineering, component manufacture and electrical installation.

76. Learners attend a local further education college on day-release throughout their programme and train for a relevant technical certificate at craft studies or national certificate level.

77. On-the-job assessment is carried out in the workplace by PETA's two field adviser/assessors and one senior field adviser/assessor. They also carry out progress reviews every four to six weeks. The training centre has an engineering centre manager, a senior instructor/assessor, four instructor/assessors, and one administration assistant. Internal verification is carried out by PETA's staff.

Engineering**Grade 3***Strengths*

- good acquisition of skills in the workplace
- good attainment of additional qualifications
- good work placements which are matched well to learners' abilities
- highly effective support for learners

Weaknesses

- poor retention rate on advanced apprenticeships among learners who started in 2001-02
- insufficient observed assessment in the workplace
- insufficient internal verification in the workplace

Achievement and standards

78. Learners quickly become proficient in the workplace and many progress to roles of responsibility with their employer. Learners can deal confidently with complex tasks. For example one learner in an aerospace company examines, fault finds and rectifies state-of-the-art, high-value printed circuit boards. In another company, a learner is responsible for designing and manufacturing components to customer order using computer aided design and manufacturing technology. Most learners on the apprenticeship programmes progress to the advanced apprenticeship programme after achieving an NVQ at level 2. However, assessment practices in the workplace are ineffective, and some learners are making slow progress towards completion of their framework.

79. Key skills training is integrated well with training for the level 2 NVQ in performing manufacturing operations, and the achievement rate is good. The integration of key skills training with work-based learning has improved over the past three years. The quality of key skills evidence is good and it is recorded well. PETA uses online assessment very effectively and the current success rate exceeds 90 per cent. However, there has been slow achievement of key skills by a few of the learners who started in 2001-02 and who did not begin key skills training until late in their apprenticeships.

80. PETA has taken a number of actions to improve the retention rate among apprentices, and there has been a steady increase in the number remaining in learning. Of the 80 who joined the programme since 2002, over 50 per cent are still in learning and 18 per cent have completed their apprenticeship. The achievement and retention rates for apprentices are satisfactory. However, the retention rate for advanced apprentices who started in 2001-02 is poor. A significant contributory factor to this was that a major local company moved out of the area and 25 per cent of the learners were made redundant. PETA made every effort to find alternative placements for those affected, but many still left their programme.

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

LSC funded work-based learning																
Advanced apprenticeships	2005-06		2004-05		2003-04		2002-03		2001-02							
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number of starts	5		14		16		29		36	100						
Retained*	0		0		0		2		7	19						
Successfully completed	0		0		0		1		3	8						
Still in learning	5		14		12		16		11	31						

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

LSC funded work-based learning																
Apprenticeships	2005-06		2004-05		2003-04		2002-03		2001-02							
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number of starts	7		34		9		30	100	10	100						
Retained*	0		27		4		12	40	3	30						
Successfully completed	0		11		2		1	3	0	0						
Still in learning	7		16		7		11	37	3	30						

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

The quality of provision

81. There is good attainment of additional qualifications by learners. PETA and employers encourage and support learners to study for additional qualifications that augment and enrich their training programmes. Some learners are studying at higher national level while still on the advanced apprenticeship programmes. Others are taking industry-specific qualifications at advanced levels in specialist subject areas. Many learners gain additional vocational qualifications in topics such as slinging and lifting, operating lift trucks, health and safety, working in confined spaces and modern manufacturing techniques. Member companies regularly use PETA for their other training requirements and their learners have the advantage of also attending these programmes.

82. Learners benefit from gaining good workplace experience and enjoy a wide range of learning opportunities in their work placements. Most employers broaden learners' experience through a planned sequence of on-the-job training in different sections of their business. At the end of each placement, learners are required to study and report on an assignment or project. These are validated by the training officer and are used as evidence for the NVQ by the learner.

83. Learners are well supported both in their vocational development and in their pastoral needs. Training officers visit them every four to six weeks, often outside of normal working hours if their working patterns demand it. Learners who have experienced severe health or personal difficulties have been given extra coaching, sometimes at the homes of the training officers. Learners have the phone numbers and e-mail addresses of the staff and can contact them at any time. Learners very much value this level of support and speak of it with appreciation. One learner had experienced conflicts in the work placement and staff

from PETA reacted swiftly to investigate and remedy the situation. Employers also give good support. For example, one is giving a learner a day off with pay during college half term to catch up on assignment work. Another employer has provided a computer for a learner to use in portfolio-building.

84. PETA's staff have good vocational knowledge and a particularly wide range of experience in engineering. Most staff have suitable teaching qualifications, or have attended vocational instructor training courses and are studying for teaching and assessor qualifications. Off-the-job teaching is satisfactory, and all lessons observed were satisfactory or better. Employers are very complimentary about the training done at the centre and how it enables learners quickly to become a useful part of the workforce. Tutors make good use of comprehensive lesson plans and schemes of work. They are enthusiastic about their role and are able to motivate learners with their high degree of commitment. However, they do not always make full use of the information gathered during initial assessment to differentiate between learners and their learning styles or to identify individual needs.

85. Initial assessment of learners is satisfactory and includes aptitude tests and a key skills analysis. The arrangements for prior accreditation of any other qualifications are satisfactory. However, there is no screening test to identify learners who may benefit from specialist additional learning support with literacy, numeracy or language. If a learner is identified as requiring additional support, PETA responds effectively and has resources available to support learners in literacy and numeracy.

86. At the previous inspection, target-setting in learners' progress reviews was identified as a weakness. Since then PETA has introduced new procedures and the target-setting has improved. Progress reviews are now comprehensive with challenging but realistic targets being negotiated and set between the learner and reviewer. Learners demonstrate a good understanding of health and safety.

87. Staff do not plan assessment by observation in the workplace in a methodical way. There is too little direct observation by qualified assessors, and extensive use is made of portfolios as evidence of competence. Portfolios are generally well compiled and comprehensive, and contain a good range of evidence such as job write ups, task sheets, specifications and drawings. Good use is made of digital photographic evidence. Much of the portfolio work is supported by witness statements from workplace supervisors, countersigned by the training officer. However, there is no register of authorised signatories to allow the validity of these signatures to be checked.

88. There is no systematic planning of the internal verification of engineering assessment. This was identified as a weakness at the inspection in 2001. There is little evidence of a structured approach to assessment sampling. Internal verification is mainly portfolio based and is carried out towards the end of the programme. Recent management changes have resulted in engineering staff being given new working instructions for the observation of work-based assessment, but it is too soon to judge the effectiveness of the new arrangements. The only observed assessment records are very recent and were made to provide evidence for staff working towards assessor qualifications. PETA is further restructuring its arrangements for internal verification in order to satisfy awarding body requirements.

Leadership and management

89. Engineering training has been transferred successfully to the new vocational training centre. Physical resources are good and classrooms are well equipped with a good range of modern audiovisual training aids. Furniture and teaching resources are good for the size of the groups. There is a good range of workshop equipment, and although some of the machines are old, they are adequate for the courses being taught. Learners benefit from good private study facilities and a small rest room for breaks.

90. Managers give high priority to the maintenance of high standards of health and safety. Staff carry out comprehensive risk assessments and regularly audit safety checks. Training workshops are clean and tidy, and they provide safe working environments with appropriate machine guards and emergency cutouts in place.

91. All staff in engineering were consulted fully as part of the self-assessment process and were involved in the production of the draft report. The self-assessment process is ongoing and the report is kept under regular review. The self-assessment report was used in improving some of the weaker areas in the engineering provision, particularly the integration of key skills and the support for smaller employers. However, a few aspects of the engineering provision have not improved, and weaknesses still exist in workplace assessment and internal verification.

Preparation for life and work**Grade 2**

Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
<i>Employability training</i>		2
Entry to Employment	157	2

92. PETA offers E2E training at three centres, one in the centre of Portsmouth, one in the centre of Winchester and one at the Havant vocational training centre. Each centre is staffed with a minimum of one senior assessor, two assessors and one administration assistant. The programme is controlled by the E2E manager, who is based at Havant and supported by a co-ordinator, a placement officer and a community essential skills trainer.

93. Since the E2E programme began in 2002-03, 1,184 learners have started with PETA and 157 remain in learning. One hundred and twelve have enrolled since August 2005. Learners attend one of the three centres for five half days of training each week. The average length of the programme is 22 weeks. Seventy per cent of learners are referred by Connexions and the rest by other youth agencies. Learners receive vocational training in either business administration or engineering through short taster courses. For learners who are interested in other vocational areas, training is provided through work placements. Learners can join the E2E programme at any time in the year.

Employability training***Grade 2****Strengths*

- particularly flexible and responsive programme
- good advice and guidance preparing learners for work
- good pastoral care for learners
- very good work placements
- good operational management

Weaknesses

- some poor target-setting

Achievement and standards

94. Learners on the E2E programme produce satisfactory work and gain certificates in a range of subjects, including computer literacy, entry-level literacy and numeracy, and key skills in communications and application of number. In 2004-05, E2E learners with an interest in engineering joined engineering learners at the start of their apprenticeships for a 10-week vocational taster. Forty-three members of this group of E2E learners gained units at level 1 in performing engineering operations.

95. In 2004-05, 118 learners joined a pre-apprenticeship module in business administration. Learners produced good-quality key skills projects based on business topics and spent a half-day each week on realistic office practice. Fifty learners (64 per cent of the overall level 2 business administration intake) progressed from the taster into the full

apprenticeship programme.

96. A small proportion of learners pass certificates in food hygiene and health and safety. Since the start of the programme in 2002-03, 33 per cent of learners have progressed into employment, further education or training and 34 per cent have achieved the learning outcomes identified in their E2E passport. In 2004-05, 34 per cent of learners progressed to a recognised outcome such as employment or further education and training. This falls short of the target of 50 per cent PETA set itself. Analysis of early data for 2005-06 shows a marked increase in the learners' interest in further education places compared with the same period in earlier years.

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

LSC funded work-based learning																	
Entry to Employment	2005-06		2004-05		2003-04		2002-03										
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
Number of starts	112		470	100	402	100	200	100									
Progression ¹	2		161	34	170	42	64	32									
Achieved objectives ²	5		144	31	204	51	51	26									
Still in learning	95		57	12	5	1	0	100									

1. Measured in terms of learners' movement to further training, education or employment, during or after their training

2. These being the key objectives identified for each learner while on E2E

The quality of provision

97. The E2E programme is particularly flexible and responsive. Trainers respond to learners' requests where practical, and are highly sensitive to their needs. The programme is particularly effective in preparing learners for employment. Staff deal confidently with the problems affecting E2E learners, including learning difficulties, and personal and social issues such as homelessness, substance misuse and low self-esteem. A key objective is to develop learners' confidence and self-esteem. PETA devotes significant time and effort to dealing with these personal issues so that learners can progress and focus on their learning. The programme is designed specifically to take into account the different stages learners go through in preparation for employment, concentrating on life skills and literacy and numeracy in the early weeks. Each centre provides a good range of enrichment activities including talks by visiting speakers, trips to leisure facilities and an overnight camping experience that instils team skills. PETA has been involved in a government pilot of an innovative personal development scheme and runs a short course in creative strategies to build self-esteem. Learners opt for a choice of especially effective vocational tasters. PETA celebrates learners' success in non-accredited learning and their gains in confidence and life skills through an awards scheme and in folders of success stories at each centre.

98. Learners receive good advice and guidance in preparation for work. Staff ensure that learners are actively searching for jobs, for example in taught job preparation sessions and through practical assignments. Learners make good use of an ICT programme to develop an awareness of vocational preferences and aptitudes. Centre staff are enthusiastic and encourage learners to widen their range of aspirations. Staff prepare learners for the world of work through the induction and review processes. They encourage them to assume some personal responsibility by getting them to participate actively in standard workplace

procedures such as absence notification, holiday bookings and bonus schemes. Staff work closely with Connexions advisers in providing learners with effective practical support and preparing them for the workplace.

99. Pastoral care for E2E learners is good. PETA places considerable emphasis on pastoral care because it considers it to be vital in enabling learners to progress. Staff recruited for the E2E programme have well-developed skills in supporting young people with additional personal needs. All learners are allocated a mentor at the start of the programme, to guide and support them. All staff working on the E2E programme are very experienced in dealing with learners who have low self-esteem, poor interpersonal skills, or learning difficulties, and who sometimes demonstrate challenging behaviour. They create positive relationships with the learners and help them overcome the barriers and challenges which limit their progress. To support this approach, PETA has staff who are trained to use specialist diagnostic tools. Feedback from learners indicates that they value greatly the effectiveness of PETA's pastoral care.

100. PETA provides opportunities for very good work placements. Most learners benefit from work placements at some time during their programme. The duration of placements can last for between one day and eight weeks. Learners have access to an excellent range of work placements, with over a hundred employers to choose from. Each organisation that offers a work placement is carefully inspected by the work-placement officer, before and during the placement, to ensure that it satisfies PETA's health and safety standards, and approach to equality of opportunity. PETA pays particularly close attention to the health and safety of learners. Where necessary, learners are provided with the appropriate personal protective equipment and are fully informed of their health and safety rights and obligations. Learners are not considered for work placement until they are deemed ready by their mentor. They have a full curriculum vitae and a practice interview. Employers and learners are highly satisfied with the experience and the levels of support provided by PETA. A number of PETA's learners have continued into regular employment at their work placement or opted for a voluntary extension. Effective use of work experience allows learners to confirm their career choices with a clear understanding of the vocational area.

101. Teaching and learning are satisfactory with 85 per cent of the lessons observed being satisfactory or better, and 62 per cent good or better. In the better sessions learners enjoy a wide range of stimulating activities directly related to real life. For instance, in one lively session learners developed their awareness of health and safety issues by conducting internet searches. They also made imaginative use of computer aided drawing tools to illustrate the use of safety equipment in the training environment. In some weaker sessions, trainers place insufficient emphasis on skills acquisition by learners, and concentrate more on a finished product or an accreditation aim. Some learners are poorly stimulated by too many dull worksheets. Most trainers give constructive feedback to learners.

102. PETA identified a requirement for additional support for E2E learners in literacy and numeracy at entry levels 1 and 2. A basic skills tutor has been appointed and spends an equal amount of time in each centre teaching groups and individual learners. The new arrangements were put in place in August 2005 and early indications are that they are proving effective in improving learners' literacy, numeracy and language skills.

103. Trainers use a satisfactory range of initial assessment tools. These include analysis of learning styles, and initial and diagnostic assessment of literacy and numeracy. Trainers do

not, however, make adequate use of the results of learning styles assessment. They pay insufficient attention to individual learners' specific literacy and numeracy needs when planning activities in some subject areas.

104. Some target-setting is poor. The targets in learners' E2E Passports and on their weekly activity sheets refer excessively to accreditation or suggested activities rather than to learning or skills development. Trainers set literacy and numeracy targets that are sometimes expressed in language and terms that many learners find too difficult to understand.

Leadership and management

105. Operational management of the E2E programmes is good. Managers use and contribute to a comprehensive process file that contains detailed analysis of each strand of the E2E learning programme. This also acts as a very useful development tool for teamwork and collaboration between the three centres. Managers and staff communicate well with each other and with learners. Regular team meetings complement more informal sharing of views, concerns and ideas. E2E staff are highly committed to the programme. Staff feel valued, and that they are able to contribute to the decision-making process throughout the company.

106. Staff at all levels attend a good range of training and development programmes and activities. PETA encourages staff to work towards training qualifications. Two trainers have achieved a level 4 certificate in adult literacy for subject specialists. However, some of the trainers who support learners in independent study sessions are not adequately qualified to teach or support learners in literacy and numeracy. Observation of teaching and learning is not sufficiently thorough. A new teaching and learning observation system has recently been introduced but it is too early to judge its effect on the quality of teaching.

107. Staff actively promote equality and diversity. Learners discuss equal opportunities issues at induction and before attending work placements. They attend sessions intended to raise awareness of equality and diversity issues. During progress reviews, trainers check actively for learners' understanding of issues.

108. There is comfortable and reasonably spacious accommodation at each centre and sufficient modern ICT and multimedia equipment. Learners use a satisfactory range of worksheets and printed resources. However learners with restricted mobility do not have adequate access to the training facilities at Portsmouth and Winchester.

109. Management of quality improvement is satisfactory. All staff contribute to the self-assessment process. The current self-assessment report partially recognises some of the strengths identified by this inspection but not the weakness in target-setting.

Business administration and law**Grade 2**

Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Administration		2
Apprenticeships for young people	45	2

110. There are 33 apprentices and 12 advanced apprentices in business administration, all of them employed. Recruitment takes place throughout the year and learners can start the apprenticeship programme at any time. Learners are recruited through Connexions, schools, their employers, by direct application and from the E2E programme. All applicants take PETA's own assessments and initial assessment tests which cover the basic skills of literacy and numeracy. Staff use assessment results in conjunction with interviews to identify appropriate training courses and work placements.

111. Business administration learners attend day-release training every two weeks at PETA's training centre in Havant. All business administration learners and their supervisors are visited in the workplace at least every four weeks. Additional coaching and individual support are available at the learning centres. PETA has four business administration assessor/trainers who carry out progress reviews, provide key skills training, conduct assessment and teach the background knowledge for the technical certificate.

112. Learners gain good vocational skills in the workplace and quickly make significant contributions to their employers' businesses. Learners' skills are valued by employers and meet the standards needed in the workplace. Some learners often work on their own initiative, and some make an exceptional contribution. One learner, for example has taken the initiative and set up a database of local conference venues, including facilities and costings, enabling all sections of the company to easily find suitable off-site meeting facilities. This provides excellent evidence for the NVQ element of the framework as well as saving the company significant labour costs.

Administration**Grade 2***Strengths*

- particularly good key skills training
- thorough reviews of learners' progress
- particularly good support for learners
- very good pre-apprenticeship taster programme
- good operational management

Weaknesses

- insufficient analysis of initial assessment data

Achievement and standards

113. Retention and achievement rates on advanced apprenticeship programmes are satisfactory. At the previous inspection, achievement and completion rates for apprentices

were a weakness and there had been no completions to date. Although the rates improved in 2001-02, they have gradually declined since then from 57 per cent to 53 per cent in 2003-04. In the same period, achievement rates for advanced apprentices declined from 48 per cent to 41 per cent. All the apprentices who started in 2004-05 are still in learning.

114. There is good achievement of key skills qualifications, particularly during the early stages of the programmes. The initial pass rate is currently above 71 per cent.

115. Learners are well motivated. They maintain well-structured portfolios of evidence for NVQ assessment. There is good progression from the taster courses. Many learners who complete the business administration taster programme transfer to the apprenticeship framework. Sixty-two per cent of the learners who started apprenticeships this year have transferred from the taster programmes.

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

LSC funded work-based learning																	
Advanced apprenticeships	2004-05		2003-04		2002-03		2001-02										
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
Number of starts	13		17	100	18	100	21	100									
Retained*	0		9	53	10	56	12	57									
Successfully completed	0		7	41	8	44	10	48									
Still in learning	12		0	0	0	0	0	0									

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

LSC funded work-based learning																			
Apprenticeships	2005-06		2004-05		2003-04		2002-03		2001-02										
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
Number of starts	7		35	100	21	100	59	100	37	100									
Retained*	0		6	17	11	52	34	58	20	54									
Successfully completed	0		3	9	6	29	31	53	18	49									
Still in learning	7		23	66	3	14	0	0	0	0									

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

The quality of provision

116. Key skills training is particularly good and is provided at an early stage in the programme. At induction, learners are given clear guidance on the importance of key skills training and the way in which it is integrated with their vocational studies. Tutors make good use of internet-based resources, and the examples they use in teaching are related to business situations and to job roles. Tutors employ good strategies to build learners' confidence, particularly in the teaching of application of number. Learners speak highly of the quality of this teaching. The skills that learners gain enable them to become more effective employees and improve their chances of completing their apprenticeships. Teaching in vocational training sessions is also good. Three of the four sessions observed were good and the other was satisfactory.

117. Learners' progress reviews are very thorough and are used very effectively to measure progress, set short-term targets, and identify issues that may affect learning. The reviews cover all aspects of the apprenticeship framework and are used to check learners' knowledge and understanding of a range of issues including health and safety, equality of opportunity and learners' rights and responsibilities. If a learner has had personal or health problems that affect his or her progress and performance, PETA has been quick to provide effective additional support in the form of additional or rearranged training sessions. Programme extensions are allowed where necessary. Where learners' job roles change, PETA amends their programmes to ensure that their training remains relevant and timely.

118. PETA's support for learners is particularly good throughout the programme both on and off the job. At recruitment and before joining the programme, learners have a very detailed interview. They are encouraged to think carefully about their own strengths, weaknesses and interests, and are given clear advice on the possible vocational training and career options PETA can offer. Comprehensive records are kept and where necessary passed on to other members of the team or to employers. Where specific action is needed to support a learner, this is provided quickly and effectively. PETA has good links to specialist support services such as Connexions, which it uses well to the benefit of learners. Staff make every effort to ensure that all learners are placed on programmes that match their background skills and interests. The business administration taster programme is used particularly well to ensure that learners are correctly placed.

119. PETA provides a very good pre-apprenticeship taster programme, on which off-the-job teaching, training and learning are particularly good. Learners make good use of the excellent opportunities they are given to display and develop skills whatever their previous experience. They enjoy building the confidence to use their new skills and to transfer to the apprenticeship framework. Learners' literacy and numeracy skills are improved significantly on the taster programme.

120. PETA provides a good induction for learners, either at their workplace or at the learning centre in Portsmouth. The induction programme is comprehensive and well structured and learners clearly recall its content. Staff give health and safety a high priority and promote equality of opportunity particularly effectively. Equality of opportunity is covered in some detail with good examples of different aspects of grievance, discipline, bullying and harassment.

121. Off-the-job training for apprentices is satisfactory but does not always extend all the learners sufficiently. Sometimes learners finish tasks early and have to wait for others to catch up, and sometimes they cannot see the relevance of the work they are given. Learners are satisfied with the training they are receiving in the workplace and at the PETA training centre, but a small minority feel that they have been placed on a lower level of apprenticeship framework than they are capable of achieving.

122. Most learners have work placements that enable them to develop new skills and meet the requirements of the apprenticeship framework. PETA has well-established links with a wide variety of business organisations that provide an extensive range of work placements. These include financial organisations, the health service, local authorities, small and medium-sized engineering firms, and the hospitality sector. Most employers are very supportive, and workplace supervisors play a significant role in giving learners tasks that

enable them to gain skills and demonstrate them for their NVQs. However, a few workplace supervisors and employers have insufficient awareness of the demands of the framework. On the few occasions where an employer has expressed dissatisfaction with PETA's training, PETA has responded positively and made appropriate adjustments to meet the employer's needs.

Leadership and management

123. Operational management of the business administration programmes is good. Programmes are well organised, and use workplace supervisors very effectively. Through their regular visits and careful monitoring, PETA's staff encourage good training in the workplace. They keep detailed records of observations of learners' performance at work. Off-the-job learning is matched well to learners' job roles and employers' and learners' needs. Staff teams hold regular meetings to share information and plan training. These meetings set effective action plans that are reviewed at subsequent meetings. Staff make good use of central management information in programme planning and management.

124. PETA makes good use of a wide range of processes and actions to improve the quality of its business administration programmes. Procedures are reviewed regularly and amended if necessary to ensure the continuous improvement of the provision. For example, a revised form has recently been issued for use during learners' progress reviews. It is designed to check learners' understanding of equal opportunities more effectively. Course content and supporting documents are regularly reviewed. Some learners are now being encouraged to use online documents to prepare for their progress reviews before their assessor's visits. Internal verification is recorded and managed well. Internal verifiers support assessors and add suitable comments to portfolios to improve assessors' performance. The sampling and frequency of verification are good. There is particularly good communication with the E2E department in planning the business administration taster strand of the E2E programme.

125. Staff are appropriately qualified and suitably experienced, and PETA regularly monitors their performance. The monitoring process is of a very high quality and is clearly understood by staff and managers. Staff take advantage of in-house professional development opportunities and attend external courses funded by PETA. Observations of teaching and learning are carried out but the arrangements are under development and have not yet had a significant effect on teaching and learning.

126. Staff in business administration are fully involved in the self-assessment process and make a valuable contributions to it. In business administration, PETA has made good use of self-assessment to help improve some of the areas identified at the previous inspection as having shortcomings. In particular, retention and achievement rates and learners' progress reviews have improved. The report identifies many of the same strengths as the inspectors.

127. PETA collects significant and wide-ranging data on its business administration programmes. However, there is too little analysis of data on initial assessment, apprenticeship training provision and the overall performance of the programme as an effective aid to continuous improvement. PETA recognises that more critical analysis of general trends will enable the programme manager to plan more effectively for further improvements in retention and achievement rates.

