

INSPECTION REPORT

Kettering Borough Training

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
- **learnndirect** provision
- Adult and Community Learning
- training funded by Jobcentre Plus
- education and training in prisons, at the invitation of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Prisons.

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

Pre-inspection analysis

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

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

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

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

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

Overall effectiveness

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

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

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

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

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

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

Grading

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

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

INSPECTION REPORT

Kettering Borough Training

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INSPECTION REPORT

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROVIDER

1. Kettering Borough Training (KBT) was formed in 1982 and is part of Kettering Borough Council. The main training centre and office is located close to the council's administrative offices. KBT also rents a dedicated training suite at a local youth centre owned by the County Council to deliver a large proportion of the Entry to Employment (E2E) programme.
2. KBT offers work-based learning programmes for young people in construction crafts, engineering, business administration, hairdressing, print media, customer service, and care. The provider also offers access training through an E2E programme delivering key skills training, jobsearch, and basic construction training.
3. Programmes in business administration, customer service and care, and the E2E programme are delivered in-house by KBT. National vocational qualifications (NVQs) and technical certificates for other apprenticeships are delivered by six local colleges of further education, Tresham Institute, Moulton College, Leicester College, Northampton College, Barnfield College and Matthew Boulton College.

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS

Grade 3

4. **The overall effectiveness of the provision is satisfactory.** Of the areas inspected, KBT's leadership and management and its arrangements for equality of opportunity and quality improvement are good. The provision in construction crafts is good, and the provisions in engineering and preparation for life and work are satisfactory.
5. **The inspection team had some confidence in the reliability of the self-assessment process.** KBT is well aware of its strengths and most of its weaknesses. Staff have the opportunity to contribute to the self-assessment process, and the self-assessment reports of subcontractors are also taken into account. Most of the strengths and the grades in the self-assessment report matched the findings of the inspection. However, the report itself is not evaluative enough. It contains large sections of descriptive detail which make the actual report difficult to use as a working document. It is not sufficiently concise to be used by managers and staff on a regular basis.
6. **The provider has demonstrated that it is in a good position to make improvements.** KBT improved its grades from unsatisfactory to satisfactory in leadership and management and most areas of learning at the reinspection in September 2003. It has continued to improve the quality of its training and the retention and achievement rates of learners in the two years since the reinspection. This inspection has found leadership and management to be good. KBT has clearly demonstrated that it has the systems in place to bring about improvements over a sustained period of time. The manager and the staff have the determination and skills to make further improvements and to maintain those already made.

KEY CHALLENGES FOR KETTERING BOROUGH TRAINING:

- ensure the completion of apprenticeship frameworks
- improve the use of data
- increase the use of work experience on E2E programmes
- develop a more self-critical approach to self-assessment
- improve the co-ordination of on- and off-the-job training
- further develop the sharing of good practice

GRADES

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

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

Engineering and manufacturing technologies			3
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade	
Engineering		3	
Apprenticeships for young people	56	3	

Construction, planning and the built environment			2
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade	
Construction crafts		2	
Apprenticeships for young people	58	2	

Preparation for life and work			3
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade	
Access programmes		3	
Entry to Employment	28	3	

ABOUT THE INSPECTION

7. Inspectors reported on and graded engineering, construction crafts, and access programmes. KBT's provision in care, hairdressing, print media, customer service and business administration was not inspected, but information from the self-assessment report and statistical data concerning these areas was used to support the judgements relating to

leadership and management. Five inspectors carried out the inspection during a four-day visit.

Number of inspection days	20
Number of learners interviewed	56
Number of staff interviewed	15
Number of employers interviewed	9
Number of locations/sites/learning centres visited	21

KEY FINDINGS

Achievements and standards

8. The achievement of key learning goals on the access programme is good and improving. In 2004-05, 60 per cent of learners achieved a literacy and/or numeracy award at level 1 or 2, or an NVQ at level 1 in construction and civil engineering services. Thirty-six per cent of the learners who began in 2004-05 have already completed all their learning goals, and a further 14 per cent are still in training.

9. Retention rates on engineering programmes have improved significantly and are now very good. Of 56 starters over the past four years, 52 are still in training. During this period, none of the advanced apprentices have left the programme before completing their framework.

10. In engineering, learners' progress towards the completion of their apprenticeship frameworks is satisfactory. Most learners are progressing at an acceptable rate. A few learners are making slow progress, but six learners are awaiting final verification to complete their apprenticeship frameworks.

11. Learners' progress in construction programmes has improved over the past three years. Of the learners who began after the reinspection, 63 per cent are on target to complete their apprenticeship frameworks.

12. Retention rates on construction programmes are particularly good for all learners recruited over the past three years. Eighty-eight per cent of these learners are still in training. Learners' prior achievements are considered carefully at the beginning of their programme. Achievements of general certificates of education (GCSE) level are used to provide exemptions for the key skills requirements of apprenticeship frameworks.

13. The development of skills in the workplace is good for construction and engineering. Learners are closely supervised by experienced craftspeople who act as mentors and ensure that learners have a varied and interesting range of work activities.

The quality of provision

14. **On access programmes, learners develop their social and personal skills through actively participating in a wide range of activities.** Numerous sporting activities, and modules covering financial management and health awareness issues are successful in supporting learners' development.
15. **Learners develop good literacy and numeracy skills on the access programme.** The standard of learners' work is very good and they receive good support from tutors who are qualified to deliver literacy and numeracy skills training.
16. **KBT offers training in a broad range of construction programmes** that meet learners' and employers' needs. These programmes include plastering, bricklaying, painting and decorating, plumbing, electrical installation, and bench and site carpentry.
17. **Learners' progress on construction programmes is well monitored.** Good use is made of progress reviews and learners' target sheets to impress on learners what they need to do to complete their programmes.
18. Assessment practices in construction are generally satisfactory. Apprentices in electrical installation receive regular site visits for assessment purposes. Other craft apprentices do not have regular site visits. All assessments are well planned, and issues raised by external verification are monitored by KBT, are raised with the relevant subcontracting college and resolved quickly.
19. Off-the-job training in engineering is satisfactory. Some off-the-job training is very effective and in one case is often provided at the employer's premises by one tutor for two learners. A small number of learners on welding programmes have been disadvantaged by insufficient qualified staff at one of the colleges.
20. The delivery of key skills on engineering programmes is now satisfactory. Previous arrangements were inadequate, but corrective action has been taken by the provider. The provider has ensured that key skills training is delivered by colleges where the delivery is judged to be of an acceptable quality, and by KBT where this is not the case.
21. **There is insufficient co-ordination of on- and off-the-job training in construction and engineering.** The training and skills development of learners in the workplace are rarely synchronised with the work carried out in the colleges, and many employers are unaware of the training programmes taking place in the colleges.

Leadership and management

22. **KBT co-operates very well with its subcontractors.** The provider holds formal meetings with tutors and college managers every three months which focus on the progress of individual learners. There is a well-managed system of reporting on learners' absences. When problems with subcontractors' training are identified by KBT's staff during progress review meetings they are resolved promptly.
23. **The provider has an effective system to monitor the progress made by individual learners.** A traffic light system uses the colours red, amber and green to identify which

learners are making slow progress so that more attention can be given to them. All learners' progress is monitored by the manager against targets set in the progress review record. This provides a second level of monitoring to supplement that carried out by the learning co-ordinator.

24. Since the reinspection in September 2003, KBT has continued to improve the quality of its provision. Managers and staff identified the improvements that were required, in particular to raise achievement and retention rates. **The development plan has been used very effectively to bring about improvements.**

25. **Since its reinspection in 2003, KBT has continued to develop programmes which meet the local authority's priority for social inclusion and widening participation.** The access programme gives hard-to-reach learners the opportunity to return to learning. The number of learners from minority ethnic groups in training has increased significantly since the reinspection. Fifty-seven learners have been recruited in the past two years from wards identified by the council as priority areas for inclusion in learning programmes.

26. **KBT provides comprehensive and advanced training for its staff in equal opportunities and the wider issues of equality and diversity.** KBT has recently introduced, through a partnership arrangement with a private training organisation, a very good training programme which significantly develops its staff's understanding and awareness of how prejudice affects society.

27. The arrangements for the provision of literacy, numeracy and language support are satisfactory. KBT has staff qualified to deliver such support, and ensures that colleges also provide this support for learners where a need is identified.

28. KBT is well aware of its strengths and most of its weaknesses. Staff have the opportunity to contribute to the self-assessment process. The self-assessment reports of subcontractors are also taken into account. The grades in the self-assessment report matched those given by inspectors. The most recent self-assessment report was produced in November 2004. It is not critical enough and it is not sufficiently concise for managers and staff to use on a regular basis.

29. Internal verification arrangements are satisfactory. Responsibility is shared between the subcontractors and KBT's staff. External verification reports are checked by the manager and relevant staff.

30. **KBT does not use data effectively to manage the provision.** It is not easy for staff or managers to gain an overview of achievements, retention, or progress on programmes. The data that staff use is inconsistent and is often produced slowly by manual systems. A new computer-based management information system has recently been introduced, but staff have not yet been trained in using all of its functions.

Leadership and management

Strengths

- very good co-operation with subcontractors
- good systems to monitor progress by individual learners

KETTERING BOROUGH TRAINING

- good delivery of programmes to widen participation locally
- advanced training in equality and diversity for staff
- good use of development plans to bring about improvements

Weaknesses

- insufficient use of data for the management of training

Engineering and manufacturing technologies

Engineering

Grade 3

Strengths

- very good retention of learners
- good development of practical skills

Weaknesses

- insufficient co-ordination of on- and off-the-job training

Construction, planning and the built environment

Construction crafts

Grade 2

Strengths

- good progress towards completion of apprenticeship frameworks
- particularly good skills development at work
- broad range of provision for local needs
- good progress review and monitoring arrangements
- very supportive learning environment

Weaknesses

- insufficient co-ordination of on- and off-the-job training
- inflexible off-the-job training and assessment arrangements

Preparation for life and work

Access programmes

Grade 3

Strengths

- good and improving achievement and progression rates
- very good participation in a wide range of activities to develop personal and social skills
- good development of literacy and numeracy skills

Weaknesses

- insufficient use of work experience
- insufficient structured training in the first few weeks of the programme

WHAT LEARNERS LIKE ABOUT KETTERING BOROUGH TRAINING:

- approachable and friendly staff
- 'I achieved my first ever qualification at KBT'
- gaining literacy and numeracy skills
- 'theory teaching at college'
- the variety of work
- the individual support
- scheme is well structured
- good computer equipment at KBT

WHAT LEARNERS THINK KETTERING BOROUGH TRAINING COULD IMPROVE:

- the amount of help with key skills
- the level of work available during the first week of E2E training
- E2E timetables should be given out earlier
- equipment in the college motor vehicle workshop
- access to KBT training rooms at lunch times

DETAILED INSPECTION FINDINGS

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Grade 2

Strengths

- very good co-operation with subcontractors
- good systems to monitor progress by individual learners
- good delivery of programmes to widen participation locally
- advanced training in equality and diversity for staff
- good use of development plans to bring about improvements

Weaknesses

- insufficient use of data for the management of training

31. KBT aims to meet the needs of the community and to widen participation, in line with the strategic objectives of the council. Clear and specific targets are set out each year in agreement with the council. Progress with the targets is monitored monthly by a senior manager. The council's staff appraisal and staff development processes are used effectively by KBT. Staff are involved in and record a substantial amount of continuous professional development. Communications between staff and the KBT manager are very good. Regular staff meetings are well planned and recorded. They include all key aspects of training and identify necessary actions. Informal communications, in a close working environment, are good.

32. The level of co-operation between KBT and its subcontractors is very good. Tresham Institute is the main subcontractor, delivering to 102 of the 133 learners who receive subcontracted training. KBT has formal meetings with tutors, college managers and directors every three months. The progress of individual learners is discussed, as well as more general matters. There is a well-managed system of reporting on the absences of learners from off-the-job training. When problems with subcontractors' training have been identified by KBT's staff during progress review meetings, they have been resolved promptly and co-operatively by KBT and the subcontractor.

33. A series of systems is used effectively to monitor the progress made by individual learners. A wall chart is used to schedule regular review meetings. They are normally scheduled for every three months, but more frequently if necessary. A traffic light system identifies which learners are making slow progress so that they can receive more attention. All learners' progress is monitored by the manager against targets set in the progress review record. This provides a second level of monitoring to supplement that carried out by the learning co-ordinator.

34. KBT does not use data effectively to manage the provision. It is not easy for staff or managers to gain an overview of achievements, retention, or progress on programmes. The data that staff use is sometimes inconsistent and staff are unsure of what it means. It often has to be produced manually. A new computer-based management information system has recently been introduced, but staff have not yet been trained in using all of its functions.

35. KBT manages support for learners with identified needs in literacy and numeracy satisfactorily. KBT has staff qualified to deliver this support, and ensures that colleges also provide literacy and numeracy training when necessary.

Equality of opportunity

Contributory grade 2

36. Since its reinspection in 2003, KBT has continued to develop programmes which meet the local authority's priorities for social inclusion and widening participation. The access programme gives hard-to-reach learners the opportunity to return to learning. Many of these learners did not attend school regularly, have no formal qualifications and possess poor levels of literacy, numeracy, and employability skills. Learners, particularly on the construction programme, have developed clear aims for future study and employment.

37. In partnership with a local provider network, KBT has secured funding through the European Social Fund to deliver a 12-week programme to prepare learners for E2E. Five learners began the programme in May 2005, four of whom moved on to the E2E programme.

38. The number of learners from minority ethnic groups has increased significantly since the reinspection. KBT has carried out a significant advertising campaign throughout the borough. Currently, the percentage of local people from minority ethnic groups on learning programmes is 10 per cent, compared with 3.5 per cent in 2003. Fifty-seven learners have been recruited in the past two years from wards identified by the council as priority areas for inclusion in learning programmes. Diversity is monitored satisfactorily and shows participation rates of learners based on ethnic background, and the number of learners from the deprived areas of Kettering.

39. KBT provides comprehensive and advanced training for its staff in equal opportunities and the wider issues of equality and diversity. All staff receive introductory training as part of their induction programme. In addition, KBT has recently introduced, through a partnership arrangement with a private training organisation, a very good training programme which significantly develops staff's understanding and awareness of how prejudice affects society.

40. This programme has recently been provided for E2E learners and, when questioned, learners spoke positively about the effect it had in raising their awareness. The programme is now part of the E2E Passport, but it has not been provided for learners on apprenticeship programmes. Current arrangements for these learners are satisfactory, and equality and diversity are covered during induction programmes.

41. Premises used by KBT provide satisfactory facilities and access for people with disabilities. The provider has access to specialist equipment, such as large computer keyboards, through arrangements with the council. KBT also has access to the council's sign language and translation services. Positive messages about equality and diversity are prominently displayed at both of the sites used by KBT.

42. Equality of opportunity in the workplace is monitored satisfactorily by the provider. The employer agreement gives clear guidelines about the welfare and rights of young people at work, as well as the responsibilities of employers. Training co-ordinators ensure that learners are well treated and that they receive appropriate training and supervision at

work. Employers that do not have their own equality of opportunity policies are monitored by KBT's manager, who cross-checks the progress reviews. However, there is no further promotion of the wider aspects of equality and diversity to employers. Although plans exist to provide advanced equal opportunities training for learners on work-based learning programmes, there are no plans to deliver this training for employers.

Quality improvement

Contributory grade 2

43. Since the reinspection in September 2003, KBT has continued to improve the quality of its provision. Managers and staff identified the improvements that were required, in particular in raising the retention and achievement rates. They used the development plan very effectively to bring about the improvements. The plan is used frequently as the basis for discussions about the extent to which actions are being implemented. It is monitored and updated constantly. Improvements that have been managed in this way include the good retention rate of learners in engineering, the highly supportive learning environment in construction, and the very good level of co-operation with subcontractors.

44. KBT uses a range of other methods, all of which have been established and refined over several years, to improve the quality of provision. The staff observation system began in October 2002 and has operated continuously. Training, assessment and progress review meetings are all observed, detailed comments are recorded and useful actions are agreed with the members of staff.

45. Feedback is obtained from employers and learners by two methods. A system of feedback questionnaires is well established and produces mainly positive responses and some ideas for improvement. The learners' questionnaire is supplemented by learners' comments at progress review meetings which are extracted from the review records and analysed systematically.

46. Internal verification arrangements are shared between the subcontractors and KBT's staff. The arrangements are satisfactory. External verification reports, inspection reports and self-assessment reports about the subcontractors' provision are checked by the manager and appropriate staff. Any concerns are raised with the subcontractors and resulting actions are recorded. The quality procedures and audits have been updated.

47. KBT is well aware of its strengths and some of its weaknesses. Staff contribute to the self-assessment process, and the self-assessment reports of subcontractors are also taken into account. Most of the grades in the self-assessment report match those of the inspection. The most recent self-assessment report was produced in November 2004. It is not sufficiently critical in some areas, however, and contains extremely large amounts of descriptive text, which is not concise enough to be used for reference by managers and staff on a regular basis.

48. KBT cannot produce data for quality improvement, such as changes in key performance indicators over a period of time. In certain key areas, such as an analysis of the proportion of progress review meetings attended by employers, data is produced slowly and manually. The manager recognises the importance of readily available reliable data and has invested in a new management information system.

AREAS OF LEARNING

Engineering and manufacturing technologies

Grade 3

Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Engineering Apprenticeships for young people	56	3 3

49. KBT offers advanced apprenticeships and apprenticeships in mechanical engineering, welding, motor vehicle repair, electrical and electronic servicing and in machine print and print finishing. All learners are employed. Employers range from small local garages to a large marine engineering company and a large printing company. There are currently 56 learners, of whom 47 are advanced apprentices. Learners are recruited by referral from Connexions or directly from employers. Off-the-job training is subcontracted to one of four local colleges of further education, which provide key skills training, technical training, and assessment and verification for NVQs. KBT co-ordinates the training and delivers key skills training to some learners. Two training co-ordinators carry out progress reviews and some workplace assessments.

Engineering

Grade 3

Strengths

- very good retention of learners
- good development of practical skills

Weaknesses

- insufficient co-ordination of on- and off-the-job training

Achievement and standards

50. There has been a considerable improvement in the retention of learners. Of the 56 learners who have begun training in the past four years, 52 are still in training. Progress made by most learners is satisfactory, with six learners at the point of completing their apprenticeship frameworks.

51. Learners are trained in a range of companies, from small owner-managed businesses to larger companies, including those specialising in printing or high-quality stainless steel fabrication. Learners are placed under the close supervision of experienced craftspeople and supervisors, and quickly start to develop skills appropriate to the employer's business, often becoming an integral part of that business. Supportive managers provide work experiences that allow assessments to be made. Some learners are given the chance to liaise with customers to provide experience of non-technical skills. There are examples of learners who have recently completed the apprenticeship framework helping to train younger learners. One learner is in charge of a computer numerically controlled pipe bender, making complex shapes out of stainless steel tubing. Apprentices' certificates are displayed in the main reception area of one employer.

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

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	12		15		7		9		7							
Retained*	0		0		0		0		3							
Successfully completed	0		0		0		0		0							
Still in learning	12		15		7		9		4							

*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									
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number of starts	3		4		4	100	2	100								
Retained*	0		0		1	25	2	100								
Successfully completed	0		0		0	0	1	50								
Still in learning	3		4		1	25	1	50								

*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

52. The process is well monitored to ensure that progress reviews take place on time. The documents used are good, particularly the contact sheet and in the recording of targets. These are set and agreed with the learner and checked at the next review. The individual learning plan is referred to at progress reviews. However, the plan has been identified as not meeting the provider's needs. A new process is being developed to enable staff to monitor and record progress more effectively and to record this on the database. Employers' involvement in the progress reviews varies, although the provider does try to monitor this situation. Reviews are often carried out at college. Opportunities for the employers to become involved are restricted. Although equality of opportunity is covered at every review, it mainly ensures the protection of the learners, rather than improving learners' understanding of the subject.

53. Off-the-job training is satisfactory. Some off-the-job training is very effective and in one case is often carried out at the employer's premises, with one tutor for two learners. Other learners have been disadvantaged by insufficient numbers of qualified staff at one college. The provider identified this problem and has taken appropriate action to minimise the adverse effects on learners. Some motor vehicle training takes place in crowded premises which are in a poor state of decoration and repair and with very old cars to work on. By contrast, at this college, good use is made of state-of-the-art visual aids. This college has adopted the very recent changes in the qualifications to develop very good processes of delivery and assessment. Learners are generally complimentary about the tuition at all the colleges, but complain about the quality of some resources, particularly the old vehicles in the motor vehicle workshop.

54. The delivery of key skills training has been unsatisfactory, but this has been recognised by the provider and corrective action has been taken. The provider has ensured that this training is now carried out by colleges where the delivery is judged to be of an acceptable quality, and by KBT where this is not the case. The delivery of key skills training on engineering programmes is now satisfactory. Attempts are made to gather evidence in context and to use evidence gathered for the college for NVQ assessments. For some learners, key skills training is not introduced until the second year of their programme. One college fully integrates the key skills training with the NVQ and technical certificate training.

55. Support for learners is satisfactory and there are instances of additional support, such as finding jobs for learners who have been made redundant. Learners and employers are very positive about the support they receive from KBT's staff. Work-based assessment is carried out by college staff, except for those learners on a welding programme. In this case, a suitably experienced and qualified member of the provider's staff carries out the assessment as part of the college's contractual requirements.

56. As identified in the self-assessment report, not all learners are initially assessed by KBT. Selection is largely through interview and the provider relies heavily on learners' school qualifications to determine their suitability for programmes. To ensure unnecessary duplication, most learners take literacy and numeracy and key skills assessments which are conducted by the college. The results are not made known to the provider unless requested. The provider may conduct its own test if there are some doubts about the learners' school qualifications. None of the engineering learners are currently identified as being in need of additional learning support and as such, there was no evidence to support initial assessment processes being used in the development of learning plans. Initial assessment information is not used in the development of learning plans. Two learners interviewed had been on programme for several months but had not been initially assessed. One learner said that he would have liked more help, particularly with key skills. Induction is carried out on an individual basis, generally in the workplace, using the comprehensive training handbook. Learners also receive an induction at the college and in the workplace.

57. Training by employers is good and learners quickly become part of the employer's workforce. However, there is little attempt to integrate the on- and off-the-job training, other than in reacting to a need for evidence gathering. KBT does not offer significant guidance on how to train the learners, other than in meeting the contractual obligations of the programme. There are no formal arrangements to monitor the quality of the training provided. Employers are willing to provide appropriate work experience for evidence gathering when asked by assessors, but they are not given schemes of work and most are unaware of the details of the college provision. Training co-ordinators often do not have the schemes of work themselves. On-the-job training is good and meets employers' needs. No learners are working towards additional, certificated qualifications.

Leadership and management

58. The management of engineering shows considerable improvements over recent years. Staff are experienced and well qualified. An annual appraisal system sets meaningful targets and staff development is good. The provider has some productive links with local external agencies. There are regular, formal internal meetings, as well as informal communications among the team members who all use the same office. KBT has good, formal and informal

links with colleges. Staff meet with tutors, managers and directors on a quarterly basis. Meetings are minuted and actions from these meetings are evidenced. Internal verification is carried out by the subcontractor colleges and is satisfactory. It involves formative assessment and verification and observation of work-based assessments at one college, but is all summative procedures at another college. A relatively new database is not being used effectively and it is unable to provide consistent data. Inspectors agreed with some of the issues identified in the self-assessment report, although some of the strengths identified were judged to be no more than normal practice.

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

Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Construction crafts		2
Apprenticeships for young people	58	2

59. There are 58 work-based learners in construction. Twenty-seven of these are advanced apprentices, and 31 are apprentices. Learners are training in various areas of construction, including electrical installation, site and bench joinery, bricklaying, painting and decorating, plumbing and plastering. All learners are employed by builders, in and around the Kettering area. KBT has a subcontract agreement with three colleges for its off-the-job construction training and assessment. Most learners attend Tresham Institute in Corby. Some learners attend Leicester or Moulton Colleges. Approximately 50 per cent of all learners attend the KBT training centre in Kettering for their key skills training and assessment. The other learners receive key skills training at their college. Fifteen per cent of the learners require additional learning support.

Construction crafts**Grade 2***Strengths*

- good progress towards completion of apprenticeship frameworks
- particularly good skills development at work
- broad range of provision for local needs
- good progress review and monitoring arrangements
- very supportive learning environment

Weaknesses

- insufficient co-ordination of on- and off-the-job training
- inflexible off-the-job training and assessment arrangements

Achievement and standards

60. All KBT's learners are set clear achievement targets at each progress review. These targets match targets set by the college tutors and are used by KBT's staff as an effective means of assessing learners' progression in their apprenticeship frameworks. All learners, and in particular the electricians, understand the work they need to do to complete their framework requirements.

61. Learners' progress towards completing their frameworks has improved over the past three years and they now make good progress. Of the learners who began after the previous inspection, 63 per cent are on target to complete all the apprenticeship framework requirements.

62. Retention rates are particularly good for all learners recruited during the past three years. Eighty-eight per cent of these learners are still in training. Learners' prior achievements are considered carefully at the beginning of the programme. GCSE

qualifications are used to provide exemptions for some of the key skills requirements.

63. Learners enjoy their training programmes, and most are pleased with the rate of progress they are making. The exception is a small number of mature learners who have good academic qualifications. The college programmes are not flexible enough to allow these learners to progress at a faster rate.

64. Good opportunities exist for learners to acquire workplace skills. Learners work for a range of local builders and for the owner of a large country estate. Employers value learners' skills and competences and many learners are encouraged to carry out interesting and highly skilled work. For example, painters and bricklayers with one employer are working on historic buildings using traditional craft skills on conservation work. Bench joinery learners with another employer are working on a range of purpose-made joinery items, including complicated, curved sliding sash windows.

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

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	9		6		5		4		20							
Retained*	0		0		3		1		14							
Successfully completed	0		0		0		1		5							
Still in learning	9		5		4		3		6							

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

LSC funded work-based learning																
Apprenticeships	2005-06		2004-05		2003-04		2002-03									
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number of starts	13		7		11		13									
Retained*	0		0		8		12									
Successfully completed	0		0		0		0									
Still in learning	13		7		6		5									

*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

65. Learners enjoy their practical and background knowledge training at college and those learners who receive key skills training from KBT find the training interesting, focused and demanding. Resources at the main subcontracting college are satisfactory. The space available for bricklaying and bench joinery craft studies is often cramped, but the college has plans for relocating to larger premises. The main subcontracting college has had some staffing problems. Assessments and site visits have been delayed. New staff are being trained and this situation is now improving.

66. KBT offers training across a particularly broad range of construction craft programmes

that meet learners' needs and the needs of the local construction industry. Learners are apprentices in bench joinery, carpentry, bricklaying, painting and decorating, plumbing, heating and ventilation, electrical installation and plastering. Apprenticeships in plastering are particularly rare, and are only offered by a relatively small number of providers.

67. Progress reviews and the monitoring of learners' progress are good. The reviews are useful in identifying how well learners are progressing. Individual targets are set which identify clearly the progress expected of learners between reviews. Monitoring of learners' progress towards their training objectives is a strong feature of programme management at KBT and the college. Overall, the progress made by learners towards completing their frameworks is good.

68. The support for learners at KBT is very good. Where needs are identified, learners receive support from qualified tutors as an integral feature of their day-release training programmes. KBT's staff are aware of these arrangements and provide additional help for learners with support needs. The pastoral support provided by KBT and the college is good. Learners are confident that all issues can be shared openly with their training co-ordinators or tutors. Problems are resolved quickly and learners value the efforts made by KBT's staff to ensure their wellbeing.

69. Assessment in the workplace is satisfactory. Electrical installation learners receive regular site visits for assessment purposes, but the other craft areas do not receive such regular assessments. All assessments are well planned and issues raised by external verification are monitored by KBT, and quickly resolved by the college.

70. Arrangements for assessment and support for literacy, numeracy and language needs are satisfactory. Learners receive systematic initial assessments when they attend off-the-job training at the subcontracting colleges used by KBT.

71. There is insufficient co-ordination of on- and off-the-job training. The provider does not make sufficient efforts to interpret learners' practical work with the learning programme at college. Learners often carry out practical training exercises in college which they have already done in the workplace. Not enough assessments are completed and the achievement of NVQs is sometimes delayed.

72. College programmes are not flexible enough and are planned on the annual intake of learners. Some of KBT's learners begin training at a later stage, often after the start of the college academic year. These learners miss out on the detailed and informative early stages of the programme, such as induction, and have to catch up with learners who are at a more advanced stage of the programme.

Leadership and management

73. Arrangements to monitor and review learners progress by KBT staff are satisfactory. Learners are progressing well towards completing all their apprenticeship framework requirements. Key skills training is well planned and progression is monitored closely. Progress reviews are well managed and clear targets are set and used to motivate the learners. However, there are no effective work-based learning plans and the skills developed at work are rarely synchronised with the off-the-job training at college. Arrangements to share information about progress and targets for improvement with key staff members are poor. Few of the supervisors or mentors are aware of the targets set by

KBT at progress reviews. Equality issues are discussed with all learners during their reviews. Care is taken to ensure that the focus of the discussions relates to the practical aspects of equality such as access to training and support at work, and general welfare issues.

74. Learners and employers have regular opportunities to give their opinions on the quality and standards of the training programmes offered by KBT. The provider is quick to make reasonable changes in response to this feedback. Data about individual learners' progress is used well to set targets during progress reviews, but is not used effectively to communicate the learners' progress to their supervisors on site. External verifiers' reports are scrutinised by KBT and any problems are discussed with the colleges' curriculum leaders. The colleges are quick to respond to identified issues and their verification arrangements are satisfactory. KBT's self-assessment report, and more recent list of bullet points, recognise the improved progress reviews and better progression rates by learners. However, the reports do not recognise the weak co-ordination of learning and the weaknesses inherent in the flexibility of the off-the-job training and assessment arrangements.

Preparation for life and work**Grade 3**

Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Access programmes Entry to Employment	28	3 3

75. KBT works in partnership with Northamptonshire Youth Service and Connexions to provide an E2E programme. Currently, there are 28 learners following a range of options, including personal and social development, work preparation, information technology, and literacy and numeracy. Learners attend for a minimum of 16 hours each week, usually over a period of 19 weeks. Some learners have a work taster or work placement during the programme. KBT encourages learners to take national tests in literacy, numeracy and key skills. Eight of the learners are working towards NVQs at level 1 in construction and civil engineering services. Most E2E training takes place in a dedicated suite at a local youth centre, which has a wide range of on-site sports and music facilities. Construction training takes place at an off-site facility owned by Kettering Borough Council, on real work projects for the council or on local housing building sites. Progress is reviewed at least every four weeks.

Access programmes**Grade 3***Strengths*

- good and improving achievement and progression rates
- very good participation in a wide range of activities to develop personal and social skills
- good development of literacy and numeracy skills

Weaknesses

- insufficient use of work experience
- insufficient structured training in the first few weeks of the programme

Achievement and standards

76. Learners' levels of achievement of key learning goals are good and continue to improve. Many learners begin with a history of little or no formal involvement in education and training, no qualifications, and considerable obstacles to employment. They are particularly motivated by the achievement of certificates as early as the first week of their programmes. All learners achieve one or more certificates for the short courses that they have attended, which include health and safety, a basic computer literacy course, manual handling, deaf awareness, first aid, and an advanced anti-prejudice and discrimination course. Sixty per cent of learners achieved a literacy and/or numeracy award at level 1 or 2 in 2004-05, or an NVQ at level 1 in construction and civil engineering services. Thirty-six per cent of the learners who began training during 2004-05 have already completed all their learning goals and 14 per cent are still in training. This compares with a total of 36 per cent for 2003-04. However, most learners' work experience is not used sufficiently to accredit or assess skills which could be used for NVQ units. The progression rate of learners into jobs or further education and training is good. Of the 25 learners who began training after August 2005, three have already progressed into further education and one

into a job. Progression into work-based learning is still poor, and only three learners have moved into apprenticeships in the past two 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	25		50		44	100	29	100								
Progression ¹	0		18		16	36	4	14								
Achieved objectives ²	3		25		22	50	17	59								
Still in learning	21		7		0	0	0	0								

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

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

The quality of provision

77. The wide choice of personal and social development activities meets learners' needs very effectively. The activities are arranged and co-ordinated by KBT's staff and implemented by three subcontracted youth workers. These youth workers use their county-wide networks to provide valuable opportunities for off-site activities such as sailing, trips abroad, and outdoor adventure courses which develop self-reliance, trust and teambuilding. The well-selected range of modules includes communication, money management, sexual health, stress awareness, citizenship, equality and diversity, cooking, budgeting and career planning.

78. There is a high level of participation by learners in a range of on-site sports activities such as volleyball, basketball, aerobics, football, cricket, badminton, tennis and golf, which promote healthy living and teamworking. Learners make good use of the well-equipped sound-recording facilities to develop presentations. Local projects include working on an allotment, fundraising for trips, designing mosaic pictures for the outdoor area of the youth centre, and refurbishing bicycles. Emphasis is placed on acceptable behaviour, timekeeping, and respect for others. Matters concerning bullying and harassment are explained thoroughly. KBT and youth worker staff record when group discussions have taken place about issues such as family relationships, independent living, crime, behaviour, and education and training, to ensure that there is wide coverage of social and personal issues.

79. Learners develop good literacy and numeracy skills. They receive a thorough initial assessment and diagnostic tests to determine their skills levels and areas for development. A detailed and informative summary sheet is produced to plan individual programmes of learning. Learners receive good individual support from staff qualified in basic and key skills. The standard of learners' work is very good. One learner produced a well-researched report on American politics and gave a confident presentation to the rest of the group. Key skills training is well integrated with other aspects of the E2E programme. One tutor used jobsearch as a way of improving the vocabulary of two learners at entry level, encouraging them to use dictionaries to check their understanding of terms used in job advertisements. One learner used a gardening project to generate evidence for the numeracy key skill. Learners are fully aware of the progress they are making. Detailed

learning logs are completed for each learner, showing their progress against targets set at their two-weekly progress reviews.

80. Resources for literacy, numeracy, language and key skills are good. There is a wide variety of books, worksheets and exercises, although these are not contextualised for different vocational areas. Learners make good use of the easily accessible computers for internet research, online testing and the production of work for their portfolios.

81. Standards of teaching are satisfactory. Most sessions are lively, and maintain learners' interests effectively. Group activities are well managed. Health and safety standards were reinforced throughout one observed construction session. However, many of the lesson plans are not detailed enough and tutors do not always keep them up to date. Learning objectives are not always made clear.

82. Learners continue to be well supported. Trainers have a sympathetic understanding of the many obstacles faced by learners. Good relationships exist between the trainers and the learners. Personal advisers from Connexions and specialist agencies are used effectively to provide support for issues such as homelessness, debt, drug misuse, gender realignment, mental health problems, self-harm, domestic violence and rape. Some learners are provided with funds for clothing for interviews, and equipment for college courses.

83. The induction process is satisfactory and covers all the key elements such as health and safety, equality and diversity, complaints and appeals procedures, and an outline of the programme. Topics are reinforced over a period of weeks to confirm learners' understanding.

84. Progress reviews are satisfactory and take place at least every four weeks in construction and more often in key skills training. Learners' progress is discussed thoroughly and targets are set for the next period. Health and safety and equality issues are reinforced through questioning, but this is seldom recorded. There is insufficient recording of additional support, or progress made by learners in personal or social skills. Some targets are not specific enough, or set to timescales.

85. Internal verification is satisfactory and meets national guidelines. Feedback to assessors is detailed and constructive. Good support has been provided for a new and inexperienced assessor to improve their assessment practices in key skills. Assessment practices are good in construction.

86. Work experience is not used sufficiently to provide learners with occupational tasters or assessment opportunities for NVQ units. Although construction learners have opportunities to gain NVQs through working on projects such as public paths, drains and picnic amenities for Kettering Borough Council, only one of eight learners is in a work placement on a construction site. Few other learners are in work placements of more than two weeks and they do not have the opportunity to gain NVQ units. KBT recognises this weakness and has appointed a work placement co-ordinator to promote E2E to employers and increase the number of work placements.

87. The first few weeks of the E2E programme are not structured enough. Although learners receive a thorough induction and initial assessment in the first week of the programme, there are many periods during the first three weeks which have no timetabled

activities, and when learners could usefully be learning new skills. Timetables are not issued until the fourth week, and until then learners do not know from day to day what activities they will be doing. Many learners become demotivated, and attendance is erratic. Learners are not given sufficient guidance and advice about what the programme will entail before they enrol.

Leadership and management

88. There is good teamworking, and meetings are held regularly to discuss learners' progress, update staff and explore any issues relating to the programme. The youth workers who deliver the personal and social aspects of the programme are well integrated with the team and are invited to participate in staff development events. Staff development is good, and is related to business and personal needs. Resources are satisfactory. The dedicated training rooms are easily accessible and well equipped with computers, paper-based materials and access to the internet. There are refreshment facilities within the training suite, and a café on site. However, learners cannot access the training suite during lunchtimes. Training staff and youth workers have appropriate professional qualifications. One of KBT's staff has a training qualification and one has the key skills practitioner award. No member of staff has a teaching qualification.

89. Equality and diversity are reinforced throughout the training programmes and learners have a good understanding of the issues involved. They all attend a particularly effective course aimed at facing prejudice and discrimination.

90. Many quality improvements have been made to the programme since the reinspection, including better recording of progress. However, staff do not make adequate use of data to analyse performance trends, to compare the performance of different groups, or to plan future programmes. Staff were well involved in the self-assessment process and the judgements in the self-assessment report broadly matched the judgements of the inspection. Some strengths were over-estimated.

