

REINSPECTION REPORT

ProCo NW Ltd Reinspection

11 May 2006



ADULT LEARNING
INSPECTORATE

Grading

Inspectors use a four-point scale to summarise their judgements about the quality of learning sessions. The descriptors for the four grades are:

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

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

- *grade 1 - outstanding*
- *grade 2 - good*
- *grade 3 - satisfactory*
- *grade 4 - unsatisfactory*
- *grade 5 - very weak.*

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

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

REINSPECTION REPORT

ProCo NW Ltd Reinspection

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REINSPECTION REPORT

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROVIDER

1. ProCo NW Ltd (ProCo) is a limited company based in Wigan. It was established in October 2003 with the merger of two local training providers, Metropolitan Training and Vocation Station. ProCo is owned by Wigan Metropolitan Borough Council (MBC) and the Wigan Economic Partnership. It provides apprenticeships, advanced apprenticeships and national vocational qualification (NVQ) training in construction, engineering, motor vehicle, business administration, hairdressing, health and social care, customer services and warehousing. It also offers an Entry to Employment (E2E) programme for young people. Until recently, ProCo also provided training for adults through New Deal, however, the Jobcentre Plus main contract concluded in April 2006 but a carry over contract for work skills assessment remains active. Much of the off-the-job training is provided at ProCo's own training centre in Wigan. Training towards technical certificates and key skills for some learners is provided by Wigan and Leigh College. A small number of learners train at a further 16 local colleges and training providers. On-the-job training is provided in conjunction with local employers supported by ProCo's training consultants.

2. ProCo has a chief executive who is accountable to a board of non-executive directors and one finance director. Day-to-day management is provided by a team of three senior managers, each of whom is responsible for a key area of the company's business. They include a development manager, a vocational training manager and a human resources manager. The senior management team meets fortnightly and reports to the chief executive. The board of directors meets every two months to discuss the performance and development of the company. There are 75 staff. ProCo's training provision is funded through Greater Manchester Learning and Skills Council (LSC). ProCo also carries out many local projects, including some with funding from the European Social Fund (ESF) in partnership with Wigan MBC.

SCOPE OF PROVISION

Construction

3. There are 260 learners on construction programmes. Construction craft courses include trowel occupations, wood occupations, scaffolding, roofing, and painting and decorating. Building services programmes include plumbing, heating and ventilation, and electrical installation. There are 134 apprentices, 122 advanced apprentices, and four learners on NVQ programmes. Off-the-job training for the technical certificate and key skills for 160 learners is carried out on day release at Wigan and Leigh College and 10 other local colleges. A further 100 learners attend off-the-job training at ProCo's training centre. ProCo intends to gradually increase the proportion of learners receiving off-the-job training at its own centre. On-the-job training towards the NVQ is provided by employers, supported by ProCo's training consultants, on construction sites across the northwest of England. The construction programme manager is supported by eight training consultants who carry out training and assessments. Learners have progress

reviews every six weeks. All learners are employed in a range of construction companies, from local sole traders to large national building companies. ProCo also provides a pre-vocational programme for 20 school pupils aged 14 to 16.

Engineering, technology & manufacturing

4. ProCo has 165 learners in engineering, technology and manufacturing. There are 59 apprentices and 21 advanced apprentices on motor vehicle programmes, 43 advanced apprentices on mechanical engineering programmes, nine apprentices on electrical engineering programmes and 10 apprentices and 23 advanced apprentices on electrical engineering programmes. In addition, there are 14 motor vehicle young apprentices. Learners are employed in a range of occupational settings including garages, manufacturing companies, local authorities and specialist engineering companies. Off-the-job training towards technical certificates and key skills is provided at ProCo's training centre or at subcontracted colleges. Wigan and Leigh College is the largest subcontractor for engineering learners but a few learners attend a further 10 colleges, depending on their geographical location. Progress reviews, assessments and some coaching take place every six weeks or more frequently on demand. Eight training consultants and one manager are employed in engineering.

Business administration, management & professional

5. ProCo offers apprenticeships in business administration. There are 57 apprentices and 25 advanced apprentices in business administration. In addition, there are seven apprentices, six advanced apprentices and five learners on NVQ training in accounting. Five of the apprentices are also working towards a level 4 NVQ for accounting technicians. The accounting programme is taught through subcontracting arrangements with Wigan and Leigh College and Runshaw College. All learners are employed, some in departments of the local council and others in a variety of organisations, including accounting practices, housing associations, solicitors and estate agents. Learners can join the apprenticeship programme at any time of the year. Recruitment is through referrals from Connexions and schools, and by direct contact with employers. All learners attend a one-day induction programme at the training centre. Training consultants visit the learners every two to three weeks to carry out work-based assessment and provide support for portfolio-building and key skills development. Learners' progress reviews are completed every six weeks with the assessor and the workplace supervisor. Learners have a planned programme of off-the-job training for the technical certificate at the training centre. Apprenticeship programmes are planned to take two years and advanced apprenticeship programmes four years. ProCo is also running a pilot young apprenticeship programme in business administration with local schools.

Retailing, customer service & transportation

6. ProCo offers apprenticeships and advanced apprenticeships in customer service, warehousing and call handling. Learners are employed in a wide range of organisations including council offices, small private companies, solicitors' offices and publications call centres. In customer service, there are five advanced apprentices and three apprentices, in warehousing, there are two apprentices, and in call handling there are four apprentices. The training manager is responsible for quality monitoring, internal verification, and managing the performance of the four training consultants. The training consultants also assess in other occupational areas. Training consultants visit learners in the workplace every two to three weeks to assess their written work, carry out observations, and review their progress. All learners attend ProCo's training centre for a one-day induction and key skills workshops. Customer service advanced apprentices attend ProCo for technical certificate training. Recruitment is through referrals from Connexions and schools, and direct contacts with employers.

Hairdressing & beauty therapy

7. ProCo provides hairdressing and beauty therapy training for learners in 12 hair and beauty salons. There are 20 hairdressing learners, 14 apprentices and six advanced apprentices. There are currently no learners in beauty therapy. All learners are employed in salons in the Bolton and Wigan area. They attend a one-day induction programme at the training centre, and off-the-job training at Wigan and Leigh College where they are working towards their technical certificate and key skills qualifications. Learners' on-the-job training for their NVQ is carried out by employers, supported by ProCo's training consultant who visits the salons to review progress and carry out assessments. Apprenticeship programmes are planned to take two years and advanced apprenticeship programmes four years. ProCo recruits learners by direct contact with employers, through referrals by Connexions and by promoting hairdressing and beauty therapy apprenticeships in schools.

Foundation programmes

8. There are 74 learners on E2E programmes. They have many barriers to progress, which include poor literacy or numeracy skills, attendance problems, low self-esteem and challenging behaviour. Ninety-four per cent of E2E learners are men. Learners are referred to the programme by Connexions and can join at any time of the year. They follow a range of programme options including personal, social and basic skills development, with vocational options in motor vehicle, engineering, joinery, brickwork, plastering and hairdressing. Attendance on the programme is for between 16 and 24 hours each week. All new learners receive a six-week induction to the programme, during which their needs are assessed and individual programmes of learning and support are devised. Most of the learners have additional needs, and some 83 per cent have been assessed as at entry level 3 or below for literacy, and 86 per cent at entry level 3 or below for numeracy. Learners' progress is measured every four weeks. There are activities such as visits and outdoor activities every two weeks. Seven members of staff are responsible for the day-to-day delivery of the programme, and they report directly to the E2E manager.

9. At the previous inspection, ProCo was providing New Deal for Young People on foundation programmes. This contract came to an end in April 2006.

ABOUT THE REINSPECTION

Number of inspectors	7
Number of inspection days	21
Number of learners interviewed	43
Number of staff interviewed	36
Number of employers interviewed	13
Number of subcontractors interviewed	1
Number of locations/sites/learning centres visited	4
Number of partners/external agencies interviewed	1
Number of visits	16

OVERALL JUDGEMENT

10. The previous inspection of ProCo in March 2005 found that provision in construction, and engineering, technology and manufacturing, and retailing, customer service and transportation was unsatisfactory. Business administration, management and professional, hairdressing and beauty therapy, and foundation programmes were judged to be satisfactory. ProCo's leadership and management and quality assurance were also unsatisfactory but its arrangements for equality of opportunity were good. At the end of the reinspection process, all aspects of the provision are satisfactory or better.

grade 1= outstanding, grade 2 = good, grade 3 = satisfactory, grade 4 = unsatisfactory, grade 5 = very weak

Grades awarded at previous inspection

Leadership and management		4
Contributory grades:		
Equality of opportunity		2
Quality assurance		4

Construction			4
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade	
Construction crafts			
- Apprenticeships for young people	268	4	
Building services			
- Apprenticeships for young people	44	4	

Engineering, technology & manufacturing			4
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade	
Motor vehicle/cycle			
- Apprenticeships for young people	82	4	
Mechanical engineering			
- Apprenticeships for young people	116	4	
Electrical engineering			
- Apprenticeships for young people	20	4	
Manufacturing			
- Work-based learning for adults	10	4	
Other contributory areas			
- Apprenticeships for young people	11	None	

Business administration, management & professional			3
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade	
Business administration			
- Apprenticeships for young people	118	3	
- New Deal 25+ and work-based learning for adults	21	3	
- Other government-funded provision	5	None	
Accounting and economics			
- Apprenticeships for young people	20	3	

PROCO NW LTD REINSPECTION

Retailing, customer service & transportation		4
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
<i>Customer service</i>		
- Other government-funded provision	34	4
- Apprenticeships for young people	8	4
<i>Warehousing and distribution</i>		
- Apprenticeships for young people	5	4
<i>Call centre operations</i>		
- Apprenticeships for young people	3	4

Hairdressing & beauty therapy		3
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
<i>Hairdressing</i>		
- Apprenticeships for young people	25	3

Foundation programmes		3
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
<i>Employability/employment training</i>		
- Entry to Employment	51	3
- New Deal for young people	18	3

Grades awarded at reinspection

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

Construction		3
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Construction crafts - Apprenticeships for young people	250	3
Building services - Apprenticeships for young people	6	3

Engineering, technology & manufacturing		3
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Motor vehicle/cycle - Apprenticeships for young people	80	3
Mechanical engineering - Apprenticeships for young people	43	3
Electrical engineering - Apprenticeships for young people	9	3
Manufacturing - Apprenticeships for young people	33	3

Business administration, management & professional		2
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Business administration - Apprenticeships for young people	82	2
Accounting and economics - Apprenticeships for young people	13	2

Retailing, customer service & transportation		3
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Customer service - Apprenticeships for young people	8	3
Warehousing and distribution - Apprenticeships for young people	2	3
Call centre operations - Apprenticeships for young people	4	3

Hairdressing & beauty therapy		3
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
<i>Hairdressing</i> - Apprenticeships for young people	20	3

Foundation programmes		3
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
<i>Employability/employment training</i> - Entry to Employment	74	3

KEY FINDINGS

Achievement and standards

11. **Learners in construction develop good practical skills** in the workplace, and many produce good-quality work that meets industry standards. Learners work closely with qualified operatives in the workplace and are valued by their employers.

12. **Learners in call handling and customer service develop good skills** and greater self-confidence in dealing with customers in the workplace. Employers recognise and value this, and many learners have been given more responsibility at work.

13. **Achievement rates for learners on Employer Training Pilot (ETP) pilot programmes in customer services have been good.** Since 2003, 24 learners have started on programmes and 75 per cent have achieved their NVQ.

14. **Achievement rates are good on advanced apprenticeship programmes in accounting.** On advanced apprenticeship programmes in business administration they are now satisfactory. Since ProCo implemented its strategy to improve achievement, good progress has been made and achievement rates on all apprenticeship programmes have improved. At the previous inspection, ProCo offered a New Deal for Young People programme in business administration. Progression into work on this programme was good at 45 per cent. The Jobcentre Plus contract concluded in April 2006.

15. Standards in hairdressing and beauty therapy have been maintained since the previous inspection. Learners' practical skills are satisfactory and are at the level expected for their period of time in training. Learners take pride in their work, and their assignments are well organised and presented. Achievement rates are good at 71 per cent in 2003-04 but the number of learners is small.

16. Standards on foundation programmes have been maintained. Learners' on the E2E programme achieve satisfactory progression into further education, training or jobs. The

rate of progression for learners who started in 2004-05 was 56 per cent, an improvement from 37 per cent in 2003-04. In 2003-04, few learners completed their planned learning. This improved in 2004-05 but was still low at 25 per cent. Achievement rates in literacy and numeracy for learners on New Deal for Young People programmes were good at 54 per cent. However, their rate of progression to jobs was low at 11 per cent and declining.

17. Achievement rates in construction are low but are beginning to improve. The achievement rate for advanced apprentices who started in 2001-02 is 38 per cent so far. For apprentices who started in 2003-04 it is 23 per cent so far. Learners from both intakes are still in learning and there is the potential for rates to improve. Of the learners who started in 2005-06, 94 per cent of apprentices and 91 per cent of advanced apprentices are still in learning.

18. Framework achievement rates in engineering are low, but improving. During the reinspection visits there was a steady achievement. At the first visit, seven learners had achieved their framework, and by the second visit a further 14 had done so. At the final visit, an additional 21 had achieved. The achievement rates for advanced apprentices who started in 2001-02 is 37 per cent and for apprentices who started in 2002-03 is 40 per cent. Learners from both intakes are still in learning and the achievement rates may still rise.

19. A few learners in business administration have made slow progress and are beyond their expected end dates. However, ProCo is dealing with this, and since the previous inspection 28 learners have completed advanced apprenticeships and 37 have completed apprenticeships. Retention rates have improved on both apprenticeship and advanced apprenticeship programmes and are now satisfactory.

20. Framework achievement rates are low in customer services, warehousing and call centre operations. Of the nine advanced apprentices who started between 2003 and 2005, only two have achieved the framework, and a further three are still in learning. Of the 21 apprentices who started during the same period, only two have completed the framework and nine are still in learning.

Quality of education and training

Grades awarded to learning sessions

	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Total
Construction	0	2	2	0	4
Engineering, technology & manufacturing	0	2	3	0	5
Total	0	4	5	0	9

21. Learners in construction receive particularly good support from training consultants, and this meets their pastoral and learning needs. Additional support for literacy and numeracy is made relevant to construction, and offered to all learners, regardless of prior attainment. Many take it up, and it has enabled some to develop skills that will help with

progression to higher-level qualifications.

22. ProCo's actions to widen participation have been effective. There is clear strategic planning to encourage women into construction and to deal with under-representation. The provider has worked closely with employers and with the local Muslim and Chinese community to train women in construction trades. There is also provision for 14-16 year olds, many of whom are disaffected with mainstream education. Some of these learners have progressed into construction apprenticeships.

23. There are good arrangements for the health and safety of learners. The appraisal and monitoring of health and safety in the workplace were weak at the previous inspection, but are now good. All work placements are regularly reappraised, and site assessments are carried out every six weeks.

24. There is good support for learners in all engineering programmes. ProCo provides a range of formal and informal support to maintain learners' motivation and commitment. For example, progress reviews take place every six weeks, and there are additional assessment visits on demand, outside of normal working hours when required. Training consultants provide additional formal and informal support. This includes literacy and numeracy support and key skills coaching.

25. A good tracking system has been developed to monitor the progress of motor vehicle learners. The system gives immediate access to information on learners' progress with their NVQ units, workshop jobs, practical assignments and key skills units. It is being tailored for use in other engineering trades and for inclusion on the company's intranet system where it would be accessible to all training consultants. Assessment planning is now more effective and is based on accurate awareness of each learner's current progress.

26. Learners in business administration have access to good individual support from a well-qualified and experienced team of training consultants. Learners are visited every two to three weeks to plan and assess their NVQ competence. At each visit, training consultants complete a useful assessment action plan, setting clear targets for the learners to achieve. Training for key skills and the technical certificate for learners who cannot attend off-the-job training is provided effectively through good-quality learning materials.

27. ProCo has developed particularly effective links with employers and partners in business administration. The extensive range of employer links enables training consultants to identify suitable job roles which meet the individual needs of the learners. The good working relationships enhance the learners' experience and contribute towards their achievement. Employers contribute effectively to learners' training and assessment in the workplace. Employers and training consultants work together to create opportunities for learners to achieve their potential.

28. Support for learners in customer services, warehousing and call centre operations is good and effectively promotes learning. Learners are helped to seek jobs, and new

employment has been found very quickly for three learners who were made redundant. Employers are very supportive, and give learners time at work to complete their portfolios. They willingly provide witness testimonies and ensure learners are involved in relevant projects at work.

29. Training resources for hairdressing learners are good. Learners are employed in good commercial salons that offer a good range of hairdressing services, products and retail lines from which learners have the opportunity to develop appropriate sales and hairdressing techniques in a good industrial setting. Most employers arrange weekly on-the-job training sessions to ensure learners are appropriately skilled to perform a good range of hairdressing tasks. The hairdressing salons at the college are equipped to a good industrial standard and provide a stimulating learning environment.

30. Learners in hairdressing receive good support. Staff make good use of initial assessment to accurately identify individual learners' support needs. There are effective arrangements for learners to receive additional literacy and numeracy support where required. Learners are kept fully informed about language and numeracy assessment outcomes and are involved in deciding how the support will be given.

31. There is a good range of vocational skills development in the E2E programme. ProCo provides a wide range of occupational areas such as motor vehicle, bricklaying, joinery, plastering and hairdressing which are available for E2E learners. Learners develop useful vocational skills, preparing them well for progression into apprenticeships.

32. There is particularly effective support for E2E learners. If learners have personal difficulties, they receive effective support from training consultants. The programme provides a positive learning experience through which learners acquire personal, social and vocational skills. Learners consider the high levels of support and guidance a major strength for ProCo and a reason for their satisfaction with the programme. They benefit from the positive and supportive working environment.

33. ProCo has strong and effective partnerships which benefit learners. It has strong links with Connexions and other support agencies, and has developed contacts with a number of companies who provide resources for the learners. There are strong relationships with housing groups that help learners with housing difficulties. A wide range of supportive employers provides work-experience placements for E2E learners.

34. Initial advice and guidance is satisfactory. Learners are interviewed by the training consultants and given appropriate information on the qualifications. All learners complete an initial test and diagnostic assessment. The support offered to learners with additional learning needs is good. Learners' needs are identified effectively and they are referred to appropriately qualified staff for support. The support programme is flexible to ensure learners can access sessions based on their individual needs.

35. The overall standard of teaching is satisfactory. Lesson plans are adequate but learning outcomes are not always clear. In the better lessons, there is a variety of good learning activities to encourage learners' participation and better understanding.

However, some classroom lessons are predominantly trainer led, and trainers sometimes rely too much on text-based learning material. Practical sessions are good, and learners develop good practical skills. Tutors make good use of their industrial experience to relate background knowledge teaching to practical examples in the workplace. The learning resources available are adequate and are generally used effectively by tutors. The work in learners' portfolios is satisfactory. The portfolios are clear and well organised, with a good range of work-based information. Assessment is satisfactory. It is appropriately planned and learners understand the process well.

36. Key skills teaching and assessment are now satisfactory. Learners cover key skills in their programme. A skills co-ordinator has been appointed and activities are now well organised. Results are improving.

37. Learners' progress reviews are satisfactory. The training consultants visit learners in the workplace every six weeks to reviews progress and agree action points for the next review date. Most employers are involved in the reviews. The targets agreed at learners' reviews are often too vague to guide learners about the level of performance required. The programmes meet the needs of learners and employers.

38. **Target-setting in construction is weak.** Learners have frequent progress reviews at which training consultants record their achievement and progress, and any problems with welfare or health and safety. However, training consultants make insufficient use of the learners' experience in the workplace to set targets for skills development. Some reviews do not sufficiently involve workplace supervisors, and training consultants do not always use their visits to carry out assessments.

39. **In hairdressing, training is not sufficiently co-ordinated.** Employers receive some details of learners' off-the-job college training, and copies of learners' progress reviews, but this has little influence on the content of salon training. It is difficult for learners to practise and reinforce the learning they gain off the job.

40. **Target-setting for literacy, numeracy and language skills is insufficiently developed.** Learners have an initial assessment of their literacy, numeracy and language skills and a diagnostic test. However, there are no meaningful targets set to deal with the individual needs identified, neither are they referenced to the core curriculum. Review documents contain too little detail on the learners' progress towards literacy, numeracy and language skills. There is too little action-planning to deal with these issues.

41. **There is insufficient co-ordination of the three core strands of E2E.** Each element of the programme is regarded as a separate entity. Staff do not use the information gained from the activities to create an overall approach to learning that will help the learners reach their main learning objectives. There is not enough team working among the E2E staff.

Leadership and management

42. **ProCo has good working relations with stakeholders.** Close links exist between training consultants, employers, colleges, learners and community partners. ProCo provides an effective annual recruitment and selection service for many employers. Staff maintain frequent contact with employers and apprentices, including out-of-hours and telephone contact when needed. Particularly close links exist between ProCo and Wigan and Leigh College, including the sharing of staff, internal verifiers, lesson observation information and regular reports on learners' progress and attendance.

43. **Curriculum leadership and management in customer services, warehousing and call centre operations are particularly effective,** and retention and achievement rates are improving. There is a clear staffing structure with well-defined roles and responsibilities. Frequent meetings are held where individual learners' progress is monitored and discussed thoroughly, and detailed minutes and action points are recorded. Data and communications are managed well. ProCo has taken rapid action to deal with the weaknesses in assessment practice, health and safety, and equality of opportunity identified during the reinspection visits.

44. There is **good partnership working** by ProCo to support learning. ProCo is a key member of local and regional partnerships to support learning and raise the profile of work-based learning. Staff throughout the organisation engage in partnership working at appropriate levels. There are good working relationships with the 18 subcontracting colleges, and in particular with Wigan and Leigh College. There are good relationships with employers across all curriculum areas. There are good and developing links with schools, particularly in engineering and business administration through the provision of Young Apprenticeships in four schools.

45. **Data is now used well,** strategically and operationally, to direct and monitor change. It is the basis for management decisions, and is used to monitor performance and target improvements. Data reports keep staff informed of performance and enable managers to monitor performance and prompt actions where necessary. However, although ProCo now has basic systems for monitoring learners' progress, these are not linked to the central data system.

46. **Staff development continues to be a strength.** Thirty-six staff are currently taking long-term training and development programmes. Most staff are qualified assessors and teachers or are working towards these qualifications. Almost all are appropriately qualified and experienced in their occupational areas. New and inexperienced staff and managers are supported well. Staff have attended a range of short in-house training sessions and workshops.

47. **The arrangements for equality of opportunity are particularly effective.** Senior managers and staff are fully committed to equality of opportunity and act to improve it in the company and for the learners. The chief executive provides strong direction on equality of opportunity. ProCo has achieved several national and regional awards for its work in promoting equality of opportunity. The clearly written and recently updated

equality of opportunity policy defines well what equality of opportunity and diversity means in the organisation and to its learners.

48. ProCo has developed and implemented **a good system to monitor and assure the quality of provision**. It has established effective arrangements for dealing with strengths, weaknesses and areas for improvement arising out of the previous inspection, subsequent reinspection monitoring visits and the self-assessment report. Actions, accountabilities, and timescales have been identified and good progress is being made in implementing them. The actions are detailed and extend through leadership and management, quality assurance, equality of opportunity and each area of learning. The approach is systematic and methodical and all staff are effectively involved in the process. A comprehensive quality assurance system is now established.

49. Operational management at ProCo is now satisfactory. Most of the operational managers are either new to the organisation or have changed roles. There has been an effective programme of support and training for operational managers, and they have been based together to encourage cross-working and sharing of good practice. The retention rate is beginning to improve and most learners are now making satisfactory progress.

50. Communications are satisfactory. There is a system of regular, structured meetings which are appropriately minuted. All staff meet individually with their line manager every fortnight to review performance and set targets.

51. ProCo makes effective use of management information to set challenging targets for widening participation. ProCo is working hard to increase the number of learners from under-represented groups and there have been some improvements.

52. Observation of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Lessons are graded and the grades awarded are then used to analyse the quality of teaching and to monitor whether there has been any improvement. Most written feedback is thorough but it does not always identify areas for the trainer to act upon. Monitoring of subcontractors is now satisfactory.

53. Internal verification in all areas of learning is now satisfactory. ProCo has a skills co-ordinator who reports to the development manager. A new internal verification policy and procedures have been developed, and internal verification now forms part of the quality assurance arrangements. There are appropriate sampling plans and arrangements to observe each assessor. Good use is made of feedback on the observation of assessment and the identification of actions when required. Standardisation takes place regularly.

54. The self-assessment process is satisfactory and involves staff at all levels of the organisation. Feedback was sought from learners, employers and subcontractors. The self-assessment report appropriately analyses the provision against the Common Inspection Framework. The report identifies many of the same strengths and weaknesses as the inspectors did.

55. ProCo is in a **weak financial position in 2005-06**. The budget predictions presented to the board over-estimated on all income targets and the projected budget surplus did not materialise. The company is currently carrying a significant deficit. No contingencies or risk analysis was included in the business plan, and the self-assessment report does not consider financial management.

56. ProCo has a number of mechanisms in place to collect feedback, but the use of feedback is insufficiently developed. Feedback is gathered by questionnaire from learners, subcontractors and from employers. The results are analysed thoroughly by the development manager. However, there is **no established system to ensure that feedback is acted upon** or that learner, employer or partner who provided it is told how it has been used.

Leadership and management

Strengths

- good partnership working to support learning
- good use of data to direct and monitor change
- good staff training and development
- particularly effective arrangements for equality of opportunity
- good measures to monitor and assure the quality of provision

Weaknesses

- weak financial position in 2005-06
- insufficiently complete feedback processes

Construction

Construction crafts

Strengths

- particularly good support for learners
- good arrangements to improve health and safety
- good actions to widen participation

Weaknesses

- low but improving achievement rates
- weak target-setting to monitor progress

Building services

Strengths

- particularly good support for learners
- good arrangements to improve health and safety
- good actions to widen participation

Weaknesses

- low but improving achievement rates
- weak target-setting to monitor progress

Engineering, technology & manufacturing

Motor vehicle/cycle

Strengths

- good progress-monitoring systems
- good support for learners
- good working relations with stakeholders

Weaknesses

- low framework achievement rates

Mechanical engineering

Strengths

- good support for learners
- good working relations with stakeholders

Weaknesses

- low framework achievement rates

Electrical engineering

Strengths

- good support for learners
- good working relations with stakeholders

Weaknesses

- low framework achievement rates

Manufacturing

Strengths

- good support for learners
- good working relations with stakeholders

Weaknesses

- low framework achievement rates

Business administration, management & professional

Business administration

Strengths

- particularly effective links with employers and partners
- good individual support for learners

Weaknesses

- some learners make slow progress

Accounting and economics

Strengths

- high achievement rates in accounting
- particularly effective links with employers and partners
- good individual support for learners

Weaknesses

- some learners make slow progress

Retailing, customer service & transportation

Customer service

Strengths

- good standard of learners' skills in call handling and customer service
- good support for learners to promote learning
- particularly effective curriculum leadership and management

Weaknesses

- low framework achievement rates

Warehousing and distribution

Strengths

- good support for learners to promote learning
- particularly effective curriculum leadership and management

Weaknesses

- low framework achievement rates

Call centre operations

Strengths

- good standard of learners' skills in call handling and customer service
- good support for learners to promote learning
- particularly effective curriculum leadership and management

Weaknesses

- low framework achievement rates

Hairdressing & beauty therapy

Hairdressing

Strengths

- good training resources
- good learner support

Weaknesses

- poor achievement rates for advanced apprentices
- insufficient co-ordination between on- and off-the-job training

Foundation programmes

Employability/employment training

Strengths

- good range of vocational skills development
- particularly effective support for learners
- strong and effective partnerships which benefit learners

Weaknesses

- insufficient target-setting linked to literacy, numeracy and language skills
- insufficient co-ordination of E2E core strands

DETAILED REINSPECTION FINDING

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Grade 3

Strengths

- good partnership working to support learning
- good use of data to direct and monitor change
- good staff training and development
- particularly effective arrangements for equality of opportunity
- good measures to monitor and assure the quality of provision

Weaknesses

- weak financial position in 2005-06
- insufficiently complete feedback processes

57. ProCo's good partnership working to support learning continues to be a strength. ProCo is a key member of local and regional partnerships to support learning and to raise the profile of work-based learning. Staff throughout the organisation are involved in partnership working at levels appropriate to their roles. There are good working relationships with the 18 subcontracting colleges, and in particular with Wigan and Leigh College which caters for the largest number of subcontracted learners. ProCo has formal monthly meetings with the college, and there is regular contact at an operational level. There are good relationships with employers across all curriculum areas, and an employers' forum has recently been set up in construction to improve employers' involvement. Local firms support the E2E programme by supplying resources as well as offering work placements. There are good and developing links with schools, particularly in engineering and business administration, through the delivery of young apprenticeships in four schools.

58. Data is now used well, strategically and operationally, to direct and monitor change. Data is used when making management decisions, to monitor performance and to target improvements. Data is updated monthly and sets of reports are produced for each member of staff. Every four months the development manager uses the reports to carry out a trend analysis. The reports keep staff informed of performance and enable managers to monitor performance against targets and benchmarks and to prompt actions where necessary. Good progress has been made in developing reports which demonstrate timely success rates. However, although each curriculum area now has a basic system to monitor individual learners' progress, these systems do not link with the central data systems, and the board and senior managers cannot monitor the progress of groups of learners or individuals.

59. Staff development was identified as a strength at the previous inspection and this has been maintained. Thirty-six staff are currently taking part in long-term training and

development. Most staff are qualified assessors and teachers or are working towards these qualifications. Almost all are appropriately qualified and experienced in their occupational areas. New and inexperienced managers are supported to take a level 2 management qualification. Sixteen staff have taken a unit of the level 2 qualification in adult learner support. Staff have attended a range of short in-house training sessions and workshops. Staff shortages have now been dealt with and are being offset by joint working and sharing of staff with Wigan and Leigh College. The system of staff review and appraisal is appropriate and feeds into the planning of staff development.

60. Operational management at ProCo was a weakness at the previous inspection but is now satisfactory. Most operational managers are either new to the organisation or have changed roles. There has been an effective programme of support and training, and managers have been based together to encourage cross-working and sharing of good practice. The post-inspection monitoring plan is being used effectively to monitor operational management of the provision. Operational managers have individual meetings with their line manager every two weeks to monitor progress against the plan and to target areas for improvement. Curriculum areas which were judged unsatisfactory at the previous inspection now show a satisfactory and improving picture. Arrangements for the recruitment and selection of learners have improved. ProCo now uses aptitude testing and taster courses pre-entry, and improved initial assessment on entry. This ensures that learners are placed on the right course and at the correct level. Employers taking on apprentices are also better selected. Schemes of work and lesson plans have been developed and are being used across all the provision. Retention rates are beginning to improve in most curriculum areas.

61. ProCo's monitoring of health and safety is now satisfactory and in construction it is good. There is an appropriate system of initial checks on employers followed by monitoring according to a risk-banding system. The health and safety manager has compiled a guidance pack for training consultants and employers which is now in use. Communications are satisfactory. There is a system of regular, structured meetings which are appropriately minuted. All staff meet their line manager individually every fortnight to review performance and set targets. The intranet enables staff to access essential information, including policies, procedures, plans and minutes of meetings. ProCo has a satisfactory strategy for supporting learners' literacy, numeracy and language needs. Learners receive appropriate support which effectively meets their needs. An increasing number of staff are training in basic skills support.

62. At the previous inspection, the management of the merger of the previous two providers into one company was noted as a strength, with clear strategic direction being supplied by the board and management. The clear strategic direction has been maintained and all the staff understand and support ProCo's organisational vision and mission. There has been further re-structuring of the management team, and new and existing managers have been supported well. There has been greater delegation of financial responsibility to encourage accountability and improvement in performance.

63. ProCo is in a weak financial position. The predictions in the budget presented to the board for this contract year over estimated all its targets for income, and the projected

budget surplus did not materialise. The company is currently carrying a significant deficit. There was no contingency planning or risk analysis in the business plan, and the self-assessment report did not consider financial management. A financial strategy paper has been prepared for the board outlining how ProCo will deal with the situation.

Equality of opportunity

Contributory grade 2

64. Senior managers and staff are fully and actively committed to equality of opportunity. The chief executive provides strong leadership direction on equality of opportunity. ProCo has achieved several national and regional awards for its work in promoting equality of opportunity. The clearly written and recently updated equality of opportunity policy defines well what equality of opportunity and diversity means in the organisation and to its learners. All relevant legislation is covered. Supplementary policies are in place that extend the main policy. They include disability, work-life balance, and working time regulations. Staff have flexible work arrangements to meet their family commitments. There are also good procedures for protecting learners and staff from harassment and bullying in the workplace. Equality of opportunity is a set agenda item at most staff and management meetings. An equality and diversity team drawn from most areas of ProCo meets monthly to look at developments and concerns in equality of opportunity. Details of all the arrangements are contained in ProCo's equality of opportunity staff files, which include details of how to make complaints. To date, few learners have made formal complaints and those raised have been dealt with appropriately.

65. Recruitment and selection of staff and learners are fair, transparent and consistent in application. The processes include actions to counter stereotyping in specific job roles. ProCo makes effective use of management information to set challenging targets to widen participation. These have led to improvements in the participation of learners from under-represented groups. Notable successes have been achieved in construction, with the recruitment of higher-than-expected numbers of female learners and of adults on incapacity benefit to train as trainers. In foundation programmes, good progress has been made in recruiting lone parents and learners from minority ethnic groups. Minority ethnic groups only form around 1 per cent of the local population but ProCo is working hard to increase the proportion of learners from these groups and at present, the proportion exceeds that in the local population. The company is assisting asylum seekers who have relocated to Wigan to find training. An ESF-funded project has enabled a group of 17 disaffected pupils aged 14 to 16 to achieve level 1 qualifications in motor vehicle engineering. Staff in most areas of learning provide good support to learners with physical disabilities and sensory impairments.

66. Learners' attendance and punctuality are monitored carefully to identify those at risk of leaving their programme. There is appropriate use of a range of teaching and learning styles to meet the varying needs of learners. Effective use is made of training and support staff to assist learners who need additional help in their training or in coping with personal problems. ProCo has useful partnerships with various support and careers agencies that benefit the learners, including specialist counselling staff. Learners' understanding of equality of opportunity is reinforced by training consultants using a

'tool box' review, which examines six themes. During the inspection, the theme was ageism. Training consultants are observed and monitored in their teaching of equality of opportunity, and ProCo applies procedures to ensure appropriate and consistent standards are maintained. All staff and most learners have a clear understanding of equality of opportunity and diversity.

67. Promotional materials are written in plain English and contain a statement by ProCo on its commitment to equality of opportunity and diversity. They are produced for different areas of learning and are currently being translated into six local community languages. A new 'text-to-voice' facility enables potential learners who are non-readers to access information on training. The production and use of data on equality of opportunity has improved and is satisfactory. Monitoring and analysis of data on different groups measures learners' recruitment and gender, ethnicity, and disability, and has led to action-planning and improvements in the training provision. All accommodation used by learners is fully accessible to wheelchair users.

Quality assurance

Contributory grade 3

68. ProCo has developed and implemented a good system to monitor and assure the quality of provision. It has effective arrangements for dealing with the strengths, weaknesses and areas for improvement arising out of the previous inspection and the reinspection monitoring visits. The reinspection tracker documents identifies actions, accountabilities, and timescales, and staff are making good progress in implementing these actions. The actions are detailed and extend through leadership and management, quality assurance, equality of opportunity and each area of learning. The approach is systematic and methodical and effectively involves all staff. A comprehensive quality assurance system has been established and provides an effective planning and management tool which covers all aspects of ProCo's business. There is an annual plan which shows all activities by month, with allocated responsibility. Performance is then monitored monthly to ascertain what has been completed and what remains to be done. The system covers key quality and teaching and learning activities which were not covered at the previous inspection. These include observation of reviews, induction, initial assessment, and teaching and learning sessions. Data relevant to quality assurance and improvement is used well, and the reports produced show monthly progress, and major issues and accountabilities to keep the board and senior managers informed. Detailed reports are produced on every activity, which identify actions needed to improve the provision, with accountabilities and timescales. These are followed up through individual meetings between staff and managers. However, each month there are some activities which do not get fully completed. Although there are signs of improvement in retention rates, the new system is not yet having a full effect on achievement rates.

69. Observation of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Lessons are graded and the grades awarded are then used to analyse the quality of teaching and to monitor whether there is improvement. Most written feedback is thorough, but it does not always identify areas for action for the trainer. Monitoring of subcontractors was identified as an issue at the previous inspection, but this is now satisfactory. ProCo subcontracts to 17 local

colleges. The main subcontractor is Wigan and Leigh College where over 200 learners receive part of their training. A new and effective service level agreement has been developed that clearly identifies roles and responsibilities. It covers quality assurance in detail, equality of opportunity, health and safety, individual learning plans, induction, assessment, learners' progress reviews, staff development and administration. Monitoring arrangements are not specifically identified. However, ProCo monitors the service provided by its subcontractors thoroughly. It has frequent meetings with the major partners, both formally and informally and communications are now good. Training consultants regularly visit the college to check on learners and liaise with college staff. They feed back any issues to managers. A joint management team made up of ProCo's staff and senior college managers meets monthly and resolves most issues. Meetings also take place at course team level. All meetings are well recorded and identify appropriate actions.

70. Internal verification was unsatisfactory in all areas of learning at the previous inspection. It is now satisfactory. There is a skills co-ordinator who reports to the development manager. ProCo has developed a new internal verification policy and procedures, and internal verification now forms part of the quality assurance arrangements. The skills co-ordinator has introduced changes in assessment and paperwork. Each area of learning has an appropriate number of internal verifiers, though in construction the internal verifier is working towards verification qualifications and his work is checked by the lead internal verifier. There are appropriate sampling plans, and arrangements to observe each assessor. Good use is made of feedback on the observation of assessment and actions are identified when necessary. Standardisation takes place regularly. Monitoring of internal verification is now a quality assurance activity, and a number of effective reports have been produced. All internal verifiers meet every two months. Workshops for assessors are used to share good practice.

71. The self-assessment process is satisfactory. Staff at all levels in the organisation were appropriately involved, and the views of learners, employers and subcontractors were sought. The resulting document appropriately analyses the provision against the Common Inspection Framework. However, it does not cover financial management. The report identifies many of the strengths and weaknesses as found by the inspectors.

72. While a number of mechanisms are in place to collect feedback, the use of the feedback is insufficiently developed. Feedback is gathered by questionnaire from learners, from subcontractors and from employers. Returns from questionnaires have been low, but the most recent surveys show an improvement. The results of feedback are thoroughly analysed by the development manager and there is evidence of some issues being responded to. However, there is no established system across the provision to ensure that feedback is consistently acted upon and that information on the action is fed back to the learners, employers or partners who provided it.

AREAS OF LEARNING

Construction

Construction		3
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Construction crafts - Apprenticeships for young people	250	3
Building services - Apprenticeships for young people	6	3

Construction crafts

Strengths

- particularly good support for learners
- good arrangements to improve health and safety
- good actions to widen participation

Weaknesses

- low but improving achievement rates
- weak target-setting to monitor progress

Building services

Strengths

- particularly good support for learners
- good arrangements to improve health and safety
- good actions to widen participation

Weaknesses

- low but improving achievement rates
- weak target-setting to monitor progress

Achievement and standards

73. Learners develop good practical skills in the workplace and many produce good-quality work that meets industry standards. They work closely with qualified operatives in the workplace and are valued by their employers.

74. Achievement rates are low but are beginning to improve. Overall the achievement rate for advanced apprentices who started in 2001-02 is 38 per cent and the rate for apprentices who started in 2003-04 is 23 per cent. Some learners from both groups are still in learning. Of the learners who started programmes in 2005-06, 91 per cent of

advanced apprentices and 94 per cent of apprentices remain in learning. At the previous inspection, there were 65 learners who had not achieved their qualifications by their planned end. This figure has now fallen to 33. Analysis of early leavers has improved and a system for monitoring individual's progress is now in place.

Quality of education and training

75. Learners receive particularly good support from training consultants which meets their pastoral and learning needs. There is good initial assessment of learners' basic skills, and where necessary, learners are provided with effective additional support. The results of initial assessment are clearly recorded on individual learning plans. Learners have a good awareness of the initial assessment process, and discuss the results to decide what support they need. The additional support which is provided for literacy and numeracy is made relevant to construction. It is offered to all learners, regardless of prior attainment, and many take it up. This has allowed some learners to develop skills that will help with progression to higher-level qualifications. Key skills sessions are used effectively to provide additional support for basic skills. Additional help is also given with portfolio-building, which has helped to improve the quality of portfolios. Success is celebrated by the provider and employers. Many case studies of successful learners are displayed prominently at the training centre. Many employers have worked with ProCo for a number of years and have developed excellent working relationships, which provide good learning opportunities.

76. There are good arrangements for the health and safety of learners. The appraisal and monitoring of health and safety in the workplace were weak at the previous inspection, but they are now good. All work placements are regularly reappraised, and site assessment reports are carried out every six weeks. The reports consider in detail areas such as risk assessment, prohibitions, supervision, site induction and personal and protective equipment. The health and safety manager checks the reports to identify any areas for improvement and plan actions. The monitoring visits are welcomed by employers, who recognise that they can help them to meet essential legislative requirements. All staff have received training in health and safety and have achieved or are working towards recognised qualifications. These actions have been recognised by the LSC as having a significant effect on the health, safety and welfare of the learners. As a result, the LSC has formally appraised ProCo as having a strong commitment to health and safety, and considers it an exemplar in this area.

77. ProCo's actions to widen participation have been effective. There is clear strategic planning to encourage the recruitment of women into construction and to deal with under-representation. The provider has worked closely with employers to meet the needs of the local Muslim community by developing and providing a training programme for women to train as kitchen fitters. A similar project is in place to train women from a local Chinese community. The women are working towards qualifications in building maintenance to enable them to carry out repairs and maintenance work to properties in their communities. There is a wide range of programmes, from entry level to levels 1, 2, and 3. Learners can progress between these levels. There is also a provision for a group

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of 14 to 16 year olds, many of whom are disaffected with mainstream education. A significant number of these young people have progressed both to employment and training in construction.

78. The overall standard of teaching and learning in construction is satisfactory. Practical sessions are good, and learners develop good practical skills. Tutors make good use of their industrial experience to relate their background knowledge teaching to practical examples in the workplace. However, classroom lessons are predominantly tutor led, and there is sometimes too much reliance on text-based learning material. All teaching staff are working towards recognised training and teaching qualifications and are regularly observed by the programme manager. The lessons observed by inspectors showed improvement since the previous inspection, and all were graded satisfactory or better. There are satisfactory training resources both at ProCo's training centre and at the subcontractors.

79. Target-setting is weak. Learners have frequent progress reviews that cover achievement, progress and issues relating to learners' welfare and health and safety. However, insufficient use is made of the learners' experience in the workplace to set targets linked to skills development. Some reviews do not involve workplace supervisors, and review visits are not always used for assessment. Workplace supervisors are generally unaware of the framework requirements and have little knowledge of the role they have in the training process. ProCo has recognised the deficiencies in target-setting and is taking steps to improve it. ProCo has developed an effective mentoring system to improve the quality of progress reviews. Mentors observe reviews, then provide training consultants with comprehensive feedback which identifies areas for improvement. Most training in the workplace is not formally linked with off-the-job training sessions. Similarly there is no long-term planning of milestones for learners' progress and achievement. Skills mapping documents have been developed which enable training consultants to ensure that employers are able to offer the full range of activities required by the NVQ. The involvement of employers is improving, and an employers' forum has recently been established. The first meeting was well attended.

Leadership and management

80. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Since the previous inspection, ProCo has replaced many of the construction team with new staff who are occupationally competent. There are regular team meetings, which are run well by the programme manager. The minutes of the meetings include detailed action points which identify accountability and timescales. These meetings have also been used to discuss the strengths and weaknesses of the construction provision and contribute to the self-assessment process. The management information system produces a wide range of data that is used by the construction team. However, the data is insufficiently detailed to show the reasons for some learners' slow progress. The monitoring of subcontractors is adequate. A service level agreement is in place. ProCo receives regular attendance and progress reports for learners, as well as internal and external verification reports and lesson observation reports. At the previous inspection, there was poor management of

the scaffolding programme. The provider recognised that it did not have appropriate resources to offer scaffolding training and withdrew from the programme.

81. Internal verification is satisfactory. An effective internal verification strategy is supplemented by standard forms and guidance. Standardisation meeting are held frequently, and all assessors are observed and receive good feedback with clearly identified actions. The attention to equality of opportunity is satisfactory. It is well covered at induction and reinforced at each progress review. A different topic is chosen at each review to generate a discussion with the learner. This has been useful in raising awareness and understanding of the wider issues of equality and diversity.

Engineering, technology & manufacturing

Engineering, technology & manufacturing		3
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
<i>Motor vehicle/cycle</i> - Apprenticeships for young people	80	3
<i>Mechanical engineering</i> - Apprenticeships for young people	43	3
<i>Electrical engineering</i> - Apprenticeships for young people	9	3
<i>Manufacturing</i> - Apprenticeships for young people	33	3

Motor vehicle/cycle

Strengths

- good progress-monitoring systems
- good support for learners
- good working relations with stakeholders

Weaknesses

- low framework achievement rates

Mechanical engineering

Strengths

- good support for learners
- good working relations with stakeholders

Weaknesses

- low framework achievement rates

Electrical engineering

Strengths

- good support for learners
- good working relations with stakeholders

Weaknesses

- low framework achievement rates

Manufacturing

Strengths

- good support for learners
- good working relations with stakeholders

Weaknesses

- low framework achievement rates

Achievement and standards

82. Framework achievement rates are low, but improving. During the reinspection visits, a steady stream of learners achieved frameworks. At the first visit, seven learners had achieved, by the second visit a further 14 had achieved, and at the time of reinspection, an additional 21 had achieved. Of those who remained in learning since the previous inspection, 41 per cent of motor vehicle learners, 32 per cent of manufacturing learners and 24 per cent of mechanical engineering learners achieved their framework. In electrical engineering, no learners have yet achieved though eight of the 11 learners are still in learning. Overall, the achievement rate for advanced apprentices who started in 2001-02 is 37 per cent and for apprentices who started in 2002-03 it is 40 per cent. Some learners from these groups are still in learning, so the figures may increase. At the previous inspection, 20 per cent of learners were beyond their expected end date. This has been reduced to 14 per cent at the reinspection. Even though learners are out of their funding period, ProCo continues to support them well. All the advanced apprentices who started in 2005-06 remain in learning, as do 91 per cent of the apprentices. There have been improvements in retention compared with previous years. Learners' practical work, portfolios and assignments are of a satisfactory standard and meet awarding body requirements.

Quality of education and training

83. ProCo has developed good monitoring systems for motor vehicle engineering learners. At the previous inspection, there was no formal progress monitoring system. The new system gives immediately accessible information on learners' progress in their NVQ units, workshop jobs, practical assignments and key skills units. It is being tailored for use in other engineering trades and for inclusion on the company's intranet system where it would be accessible to all training consultants. Assessment planning is now more effective and is based on accurate awareness of each learner's current progress. The monitoring system measures progress with the elements of each NVQ unit and with assignments. It is an efficient and accurate visual indicator.

84. There is good support for learners in all engineering programmes. ProCo provides a range of formal and informal support activities that maintain high levels of motivation and commitment among learners. For example, progress reviews normally take place every six weeks, and there are additional assessment visits on demand and out of normal

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working hours when required. Training consultants provide additional formal and much informal support. This includes literacy and numeracy support, key skills coaching, NVQ portfolio development and help with personal, social and emotional issues. Good support is provided for learners who face redundancy, and in most instances new employment has been secured for displaced apprentices. ProCo has provided a work placement for a young person with Down's syndrome. Initially this was with the administration team, but the learner now works in a local main dealership, where arrangements are in hand to convert the work placement into a part-time job.

85. Since the previous inspection, many improvements have been made to areas that were less than satisfactory. Schemes of work, teaching and learning, internal verification and learners' progress reviews have all improved and are now satisfactory. The initial assessment process is satisfactory. A proprietary software program is used effectively to identify basic and key skills levels and specific support needs. An appropriate range of mechanical aptitude tests effectively predict learners' suitability for vocational programmes. Individual learning plans are now used satisfactorily and are up to date. Amendments are routinely added to the plans as and when required. Target-setting is precise with short-term, long-term and urgent deadlines where necessary.

86. Key skills teaching and assessment are now satisfactory, and takes place earlier in the learners' programme. A skills co-ordinator has been appointed and activities are now well organised and results are improving. The most recently recruited learners receive key skills training during the first year of their two-year programme. Learners who are on programme from previous years are attending summer schools and additional evening sessions and having individual coaching in key skills. There is a satisfactory range of engineering provision to meet local employers' and learners' needs. This ranges from level 1 programmes to advanced apprenticeships including a young apprenticeship programme. A few learners have progressed on to higher national awards at local colleges. There is satisfactory progression from level 2 to level 3 in engineering and in motor vehicle.

87. Resources for teaching and learning have been improved since the previous inspection and are now satisfactory. There have been continuous improvements in premises and facilities. In motor vehicle, there is now a good range of teaching materials, and training consultants use electronic presentation. A four-wheel alignment system has been installed in the motor vehicle workshop. Staff have developed outline schemes of work for all programmes. There are satisfactory lesson plans for each classroom activity. In engineering, there have been improvements to some machine tools, milling machines have been replaced, benches adjusted and working and teaching areas improved to provide better circulation and access. Workshops and classrooms have been cleaned and reorganised to improve the learning environment in all areas. In engineering, pre-cut kits of parts for practical assignments are stored in readiness for learners. Waiting time has been reduced and learning time is used more efficiently.

Leadership and management

88. Engineering, technology and manufacturing staff have good working relations with stakeholders. There are close links between training consultants, employers, colleges, learners and community partners. ProCo provides an effective annual recruitment and selection service for many employers, carrying out initial assessment, aptitude testing and interviewing. Competition for able school leavers is often fierce, and employers appreciate the company's impartial advice, guidance and support when selecting and appointing new apprentices. Staff maintain close contact with employers and learners, often out of working hours. Wigan and Leigh College is the major subcontractor for ProCo's engineering learners. Particularly close links exist between the two organisations, including the sharing of staff, internal verifiers, lesson observation information, and regular reviews and reports of learners' progress and attendance. The young apprenticeship programme is developing close links with secondary schools, particularly those with specialist engineering status. This provides an effective recruitment route for young people into engineering.

89. Significant improvements have been made since the previous inspection. Staff now have clearly identified responsibilities based on primary roles of either teaching or assessing and monitoring progress. Training consultants are well qualified and experienced in their role. Many are taking additional teaching or assessor qualifications. One motor vehicle training consultant achieved a national award as work-based learning trainer of the year in 2004. There is good recognition of equality, diversity, and health and safety issues which are promoted by monthly 'toolbox talks' during the review process. All staff have had training in equality of opportunity. ProCo continues to try to encourage women into engineering. Staff have attended a number of counter-stereotyping working groups and partnerships, and there are currently three female learners. Line management is clear and staff are managed effectively. There are weekly and monthly line managers' meetings. Management information is comprehensive and is used effectively to monitor learners' progress, identify those at risk and instigate recovery or preventive action. Training consultants have a case load and are rigorously monitored. The self-assessment report accurately identifies the strengths and weaknesses in engineering. There is a strong development plan, which is used effectively to tackle issues raised at the previous inspection and in the self-assessment report.

Business administration, management & professional

Business administration, management & professional		2
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
<i>Business administration</i> - Apprenticeships for young people	82	2
<i>Accounting and economics</i> - Apprenticeships for young people	13	2

Business administration

Strengths

- particularly effective links with employers and partners
- good individual support for learners

Weaknesses

- some learners make slow progress

Accounting and economics

Strengths

- high achievement rates in accounting
- particularly effective links with employers and partners
- good individual support for learners

Weaknesses

- some learners make slow progress

Achievement and standards

90. Achievement rates for advanced apprentices in accounting are good. For learners who started in 2003-04, they are 75 per cent. For advanced apprentices who started business administration programmes in 2002-03, the achievement rate was only 28 per cent. Since the improvement strategy was implemented there has been good progress, and the rate for 2003-04 starters is 52 per cent so far. The overall achievement rate for apprentices increased to 61 per cent in 2003-04, and this is satisfactory. Since the previous inspection, 37 apprentices and 28 advanced apprentices have achieved their frameworks. However, some have made slow progress and have not completed within the expected timescale.

91. Retention rates have improved on both apprenticeship and advanced apprenticeship programmes and are now satisfactory. Of the 153 learners recruited since 2003-04, 122 remain on the programme or have completed.

92. The standard of learners' work is satisfactory and most learners make good progress towards their learning targets. At the previous inspection, ProCo offered a New Deal for Young People programme in business administration. Progression into employment on this programme was good at 45 per cent. The Jobcentre Plus contract concluded in April 2006.

Quality of education and training

93. ProCo had developed particularly effective links with employers and partners. The extensive range of employer links enables training consultants to identify suitable job roles which meet the individual needs of the learners. The good working relationships enhance the learners' experience and contribute towards their achievement. Employers contribute effectively to learners' training and assessment in the workplace, working with training consultants to create opportunities for learners to achieve their potential. Some employers have appointed mentors to support learners in the workplace. Training consultants and employers identify appropriate additional qualifications to enhance learners' career progression. For example, some learners are working towards nationally recognised qualifications in occupational health and safety. The training consultants use their extensive local contacts to arrange alternative employment if training problems arise with an existing employer. For example, two learners recently made redundant have been helped to find suitable employment. Learners on accounting programmes at Wigan and Leigh College and Runshaw College benefit from the colleges' good links with ProCo. There are monthly meetings between the training consultants and college staff, and learners' attendance is monitored through weekly reports completed by the colleges.

94. Learners have access to good individual support from well-qualified and experienced training consultants, who visit them every two to three weeks to plan and assess NVQ competence. At each visit a useful assessment action plan is completed, setting clear targets for the learners to achieve. ProCo provides good learning materials on key skills and the technical certificate for learners who cannot attend off-the-job training. The learning materials have been developed in CD-ROM format by the training consultants to support flexible learning and enable learners to work remotely. Some learners attend well-planned off-the-job training sessions at the training centre to develop the knowledge and understanding to complete the technical certificate. These learners value the opportunity to use computers in the training centre, aiding their progression and enhancing their information technology skills.

95. The support offered to learners with additional learning needs is good. Learners' needs are effectively identified through initial assessment and they are referred to appropriately qualified staff. The support programme is flexible and sessions are based on individual needs and preferences. For example, learners can choose from individual tuition, small group sessions, or working independently through electronic workbooks held on computers.

96. The work in learners' portfolios is satisfactory. The portfolios are well organised with a good range of work-based information. Some portfolios do not contain any product evidence, but effective systems have been put in place to identify product evidence through learners' workplaces. Training consultants provide evidence of work-based observations for accounting learners to add to college-based portfolios. Learners have a clear understanding of assessment procedures and the appeal process. Progress reviews are satisfactory and are carried out at six-week intervals by training consultants. They keep a detailed record of the review outcome including evidence of actions completed, employers' and learners' feedback, and realistic and challenging targets for learners to complete. This document also records any concerns on health and safety, and equal opportunities. Employers contribute to the review process by providing an update on learners' progress in the workplace. Some employers attend at the review meeting.

Leadership and management

97. Leadership and management in business administration are satisfactory. Each member of the training team meets with their manager every two weeks to monitor learners' progress and set targets. Monthly team meetings are held to review current provision and plan new developments. Equality of opportunity is a regular agenda item at these meetings, and minutes are appropriately recorded. Internal verification is satisfactory. Adequate standardisation meetings take place frequently between assessors and internal verifiers. Assessors and internal verifiers are well supported through regular staff development. Equality of opportunity is promoted well to learners and employers. It is effectively incorporated into learners' inductions and is suitably taught as part of the training programmes. Effective tool box talks help reinforce learners' understanding of equality and diversity. All staff have a good understanding of equal opportunities and have had a range of training. Staff in business administration provide good support to learners with physical disabilities and sensory impairments. Staff are effectively involved in the self-assessment process and contributed to the final report.

Retailing, customer service & transportation

Retailing, customer service & transportation		3
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Customer service - Apprenticeships for young people	8	3
Warehousing and distribution - Apprenticeships for young people	2	3
Call centre operations - Apprenticeships for young people	4	3

Customer service

Strengths

- good standard of learners' skills in call handling and customer service
- good support for learners to promote learning
- particularly effective curriculum leadership and management

Weaknesses

- low framework achievement rates

Warehousing and distribution

Strengths

- good support for learners to promote learning
- particularly effective curriculum leadership and management

Weaknesses

- low framework achievement rates

Call centre operations

Strengths

- good standard of learners' skills in call handling and customer service
- good support for learners to promote learning
- particularly effective curriculum leadership and management

Weaknesses

- low framework achievement rates

Achievement and standards

98. Learners in call handling and customer service develop good skills and self-

confidence, dealing with customers in the workplace. Employers recognise and value this, and many learners have been given increased responsibility at work. Some learners have been involved in complex workplace projects to measure customer satisfaction. Learners have a good understanding of customer service principles, data protection and credit control, and are able to meet customers' needs and expectations. Learners' knowledge has increased since the technical certificates were introduced. Two advanced apprentices took the technical certificate external test in March 2006 and passed. All the advanced apprentices have progressed from the apprenticeship programme in either customer service or business administration.

99. Framework achievement rates are low. Of the nine learners who started an advanced apprenticeship between 2003 and 2005, only two have achieved the framework, and a further three are still in learning. Between 2003 and 2005, 21 learners have started apprenticeships but only two have completed the framework and nine are still in learning. Between 2003 and 2005, nine learners left programmes without achieving the framework but three of these achieved the NVQ. Achievement rates for learners on ETP programmes have been good. Since 2003, 24 learners have started programmes and 75 per cent have achieved their NVQ. There are no learners currently on ETP programmes. Since the previous inspection, two learners have achieved the apprenticeship framework and one has achieved the advanced apprenticeship framework. Most current learners are making satisfactory progress towards completing their qualifications. Two learners have continued beyond their expected end date and are being supported to continue with their training.

Quality of education and training

100. Support for learners is good and effectively promotes learning. Learners are assisted well in seeking jobs. New employment has been found very quickly for three learners who were made redundant. Employers are very supportive, and give learners time at work to complete their portfolios. They willingly provide witness testimonies and ensure learners are involved in relevant projects. Learners working in call centres are given sufficient time off calls to spend with their assessor. Employers encourage learners to further their qualifications and progress, and some learners achieve higher-level key skills. Training consultants visit learners every two weeks in the workplace to carry out assessments. During these assessments, they complete a useful assessment planning and action plan document which sets small targets for the learner to complete by the next visit. Learners receive detailed feedback from assessors, which helps them improve their performance at work and on programme. One learner with additional social needs has been given extensive support by the training consultant and employer to start an apprenticeship. Another learner with a mental health problem has been closely monitored by the training consultant and dealt with in a very sensitive and caring manner, with referral to appropriate support agencies. The learner is now progressing well at work and towards framework achievement.

101. The standard of teaching and learning for the advanced customer service technical certificate is satisfactory. Lesson objectives are shared with learners at the start of the

lesson and reviewed at the end to check they have been met. Learners are involved in their learning and have a good understanding of customer service principles. Learners on other programmes are coached in the workplace by training consultants. Some learners attend workshops at ProCo where they develop their key skills.

102. Resources are satisfactory. Since the previous inspection, ProCo has purchased appropriate resources, and all customer service learners now have a textbook appropriate for their qualification. Other books and videos have been purchased and are used during the technical certificate lessons. Customer service technical certificate workbooks have been revised and re-written in more appropriate language and now include appropriate images, tables and diagrams. Call handling learners are given appropriate handouts covering legislation and dealing with customers using the telephone. Learners value the resources and find them very helpful in extending their learning and understanding.

103. Assessment is satisfactory. The standard of assessment planning has improved since the previous inspection. Learners understand and are fully involved in the assessment process, identifying when they are ready for assessment and selecting suitable product evidence. Some learners have a good range of evidence with appropriate witness statements and annotated product evidence in their portfolios. The recording of assessment decisions has improved. Some training consultants now record professional discussions and download them to a CD ROM. Most learners have a complete understanding of the framework components they are working towards.

104. Learners' progress reviews are satisfactory. The training consultants visit learners in the workplace every six weeks to review learners' progress and agree action points for the next review date. Most employers are involved in the reviews, and learners and their line manager receive a copy of the review document. Targets often focus on completion of the framework and overlook skills development. Equality of opportunity and health and safety are discussed at learners' reviews using the toolbox materials, however the materials are not always sufficiently comprehensive. For example, when covering the reporting of accidents, the toolbox materials do not include the reporting of near misses. Programmes meet the needs of learners and employers. All learners are on appropriate programmes and optional units are chosen to meet their career aspirations and current job roles.

105. Initial advice and guidance is satisfactory. Learners are interviewed by the training consultants and are given appropriate information on the qualifications. Initial assessment is satisfactory. All learners complete an initial assessment test and diagnostic assessment. Arrangements for supporting learners with literacy, numeracy or language needs are satisfactory, although no learners are receiving support at present. A skill scan is completed to ensure the learners' job role meets the requirements of the NVQ and to choose appropriate optional units. Key skills training and assessment are satisfactory. Most learners do not need to achieve key skills qualifications as they have other appropriate substitutes. Learners who are working towards key skills qualifications are supported well by their training consultant and attend workshops at ProCo where appropriate.

Leadership and management

106. Curriculum leadership and management are particularly effective and are improving learners' retention and achievement rates. There is a clear staffing structure with well-defined roles and responsibilities. Frequent meetings are held where individual learners' progress is thoroughly monitored and discussed, and detailed minutes and action points are recorded. Management of data is good. All training consultants are aware of their learners' progress, and the manager is aware of the progress being made by all learners. Since the previous inspection, learners are making better progress and the proportion continuing beyond their planned end date is reducing. Communications are good. Rapid action has been taken to deal with the shortcomings in assessment practice, health and safety and equality of opportunity identified during the reinspection visits. The curriculum manager has made good arrangements for teaching the technical certificate, and good-quality customer service resources have been developed by the team. ProCo has identified an alternative awarding body for the technical certificate which will better meet the needs of learners. The manager has supported an assessor who needed to improve assessment practice and has arranged updating training with the awarding body. The assessor is now performing to a satisfactory standard. The warehousing assessor is now part of the customer services and administration team and takes part in the standardisation process.

107. Training consultants have appropriate experience and qualifications, and all have had recent training including equality and diversity. Promotion of equality of opportunity is satisfactory. All learners have at least a satisfactory understanding of equality of opportunity. Internal verification is satisfactory. Since the previous inspection, a new internal verification system has been implemented which is working well. Regular standardisation meetings take place involving all assessors and internal verifiers. Records are comprehensive and ensure all assessors and units are internally verified in a timely and ongoing manner. The customer service and call handling team now includes a qualified internal verifier. The self-assessment report identified most of the same strengths and weaknesses as the inspectors.

Hairdressing & beauty therapy

Hairdressing & beauty therapy		3
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Hairdressing - Apprenticeships for young people	20	3

Hairdressing

Strengths

- good training resources
- good learner support

Weaknesses

- poor achievement rates for advanced apprentices
- insufficient co-ordination between on- and off-the-job training

Achievement and standards

108. Standards in hairdressing and beauty therapy have been maintained since the previous inspection. Learners' practical skills are satisfactory and are at the required level for their period of time in training. Learners take pride in their work, and their assignments are well organised and presented. Achievement rates on the apprenticeship programme were satisfactory at 59 per cent in 2002-03 and are good at 71 per cent in 2003-04, although the number of learners is small. Of the 32 learners who have started their training since 2004-05, 23 have completed or are still in learning. Most learners progress well with their qualifications and are on target to achieve. Since the previous inspection, four learners have completed apprenticeships and one has completed an advanced apprenticeship. Learners' key skills assignments are well researched, often well presented and word processed and they demonstrate above-average learner progress. Achievement rates on advanced apprenticeships are low. Only two learners have achieved their advanced apprenticeship framework since 2002-03.

Quality of education and training

109. Learners benefit from good on- and off-the-job training resources. They are employed in good commercial salons by employers who are committed and enthusiastic about training. The salons offer a good range of hairdressing services, products and retail lines from which learners have the opportunity to develop appropriate sales and hairdressing techniques in a good industrial setting. Most employers arrange weekly on-the-job training sessions to ensure learners are appropriately skilled to perform a good range of hairdressing tasks. The hairdressing salons at the college are equipped to a good industrial standard and provide a stimulating learning environment. Learners have

access to well-equipped libraries and computer suites where they can word-process assignments and use the internet for learning materials and supplementary evidence for their portfolios.

110. There is good support for learners. Good use is made of initial assessment to accurately identify individual learners' support needs. There are effective arrangements for learners to receive additional literacy and numeracy support where required. Learners are kept fully informed about language and numeracy assessment outcomes and are involved in deciding how the support will be provided. For example, they can decide whether to have a support worker in lessons or to have individual support sessions. Learners receive good support from the training consultant during their progress reviews, and from tutors and support workers during lessons. Learners who have sensory impairment, dyslexia or learning difficulties receive good support in literacy and numeracy, which enables them to stay in training and achieve their qualification. One learner who received support over an extended period of time, achieved the apprenticeship early and is now doing well on the advanced apprenticeship programme. One learner who is receiving literacy support is allowed extra time during examinations. The ProCo training consultant regularly visits lessons in college to monitor learners' attendance and progress, and take action to remedy poor behaviour or performance. The training consultant has a particularly good working relationship with employers, college tutors and learners. This enables her to effectively bring together all the interested parties in order to support learners and resolve problems.

111. Lessons are planned adequately but learning outcomes are not always clear. In the better lessons, there is a variety of good learning activities to encourage learners' participation and better understanding. Learners report that in some practical lessons there are too few clients to act as models. This has been recognised by ProCo and the college staff and appropriate action has been taken. Learners have a good understanding and awareness of health and safety issues when working in practical training sessions.

112. Assessment is planned appropriately and learners understand the process well. Learners have the opportunity to be assessed at work or in the college, but an appropriate and increasing proportion of the assessment is carried out in the workplace. Assessors carefully complete assessment records at the time the learners are carrying out hairdressing tasks. The training consultant is part of the college's assessment team and attends assessors' and standardisation meetings. Internal verification practice is satisfactory. ProCo's training consultant has been observed carrying out assessment by the college's lead internal verifier.

113. Learners' progress reviews are carried out frequently in the workplace. Employers are fully involved in agreeing targets, but these are often too vague about the level of performance required for successful completion of the set task. Learners value progress reviews and the process they go through in setting challenging targets. The key skills assignments are a challenging mix of communication and application of number activities. In communication sessions, learners participate enthusiastically in group exercises and role plays which effectively develop their self-confidence and

presentational skills.

114. On-the-job training is not sufficiently co-ordinated with the off-the-job training at the college. Employers receive some details of the college's training and copies of learners' progress reviews, but this has little influence on the content of salon training to allow learners to practise and reinforce learning they gain off the job.

Leadership and management

115. ProCo has developed good employer links and effective arrangements for monitoring the subcontracted provision in the college. Staff are well qualified and have relevant hairdressing experience. Tutors are knowledgeable about current commercial hairdressing and work to a good industrial standard. ProCo does not have a qualified internal verifier for hairdressing and relies on college staff for this task. The training consultant is ProCo's only hairdressing assessor, and cannot always be available for assessment opportunities in the workplace. Communications within ProCo are satisfactory. Frequent salon visits ensure communications with employers and staff are effective. Senior managers from ProCo and the college meet regularly to review the service level agreement. The self-assessment arrangements for hairdressing are satisfactory, and employers and college tutors are consulted about the self-assessment report. The training consultant meets her line manager every month to discuss all aspects of the training. This includes using data to monitor the frequency of salon visits, assessment, learners' progress and achievement against target completion dates. Learners' understanding of equality of opportunity is effectively reinforced during tool box talks which are carried out by training consultants as part of learners' progress reviews.

Foundation programmes

Foundation programmes		3
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
<i>Employability/employment training</i> - Entry to Employment	74	3

Employability/employment training

Strengths

- good range of vocational skills development
- particularly effective support for learners
- strong and effective partnerships which benefit learners

Weaknesses

- insufficient target-setting linked to literacy, numeracy and language skills
- insufficient co-ordination of E2E core strands

Achievement and standards

116. There is a good range of vocational skills development. ProCo provides a wide range of occupational areas such as motor vehicle, bricklaying, joinery, plastering and hairdressing and makes these available to E2E learners. Learners develop useful vocational skills which prepare them well for progression into apprenticeships. They also develop employment skills, and are able to follow instructions, work conscientiously and be punctual. Most learners who are ready for work secure a work placement with an employer. Currently 47 per cent of E2E learners are in work placements. There are insufficient opportunities to accredit the vocational skills that learners develop. ProCo has explored additional external certification but as yet no accreditation has been introduced.

117. Standards on foundation programmes have been maintained. Learners on the E2E programme achieve satisfactory progression into further education, training or jobs. For learners starting in 2004-05, the progression rate is 56 per cent, up from 37 per cent in 2003-04. In 2003-04, few learners completed their planned learning. This improved in 2004-05 but is still low at 25 per cent. ProCo has identified this poor achievement and is putting actions in place to deal with it. In 2004-05, learners on E2E programmes achieved 72 literacy and 46 numeracy qualifications. Learners on E2E improve their attitude to learning and the world of work, and develop transferable skills such as team working, communication and problem-solving skills. Many learners have improved their self-confidence during their training. The standard of work in learners' portfolios is satisfactory and most learners develop useful vocational skills.

118. Learners on New Deal for Young People programmes have achieved good planned learning outcomes in literacy and numeracy. Up to the end of the Jobcentre Plus contract, the success rate was 54 per cent. However, progression to jobs was low at 11 per cent and declining.

Quality of education and training

119. Support for learners is particularly effective. All learners interviewed speak highly of the support they receive when they have personal difficulties. Tutors and key workers act as good role models. Tutors have a good rapport with learners and are trusted by them. The programme provides a positive learning experience in which learners acquire personal, social and vocational skills in the context of work-based learning. Learners note the high levels of support and guidance as a major strength for ProCo and a reason for their satisfaction with the programme. Learners benefit from the positive and supportive working environment. Staff are skilled at raising learners' aspirations and self-esteem. They provide educational activities to engage learners, including visits to museums, the law courts, bowling alleys and outdoor activities. ProCo supports learners financially to buy necessary equipment and clothing, and to pay non-essential course fees to achieve their learning objectives.

120. There are strong and effective partnerships which benefit learners. ProCo has strong links with Connexions and other agencies that support learners. It has developed contacts with a local factory that supplies clothing to support learners who may be in need. A national department store chain provides packed lunches for learners when they go on outdoor activities. There are strong relationships with housing groups to support learners with housing difficulties. ProCo has helped to provide household furniture for learners who are in need. A wide range of supportive employers provides work-experience placements for E2E learners.

121. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Learners participate well in a relaxed but productive learning environment. Learning resources are adequate and are generally used effectively by tutors. Classrooms are clean, tidy and comfortable. There are sufficient staff for the number of learners.

122. Tutors and key workers engage learners' interest and introduce a variety of activities to encourage and sustain meaningful involvement. They have developed close working relationships based on mutual trust which promote positive attitudes in learners as well as the desire to succeed. Learners gain good occupational and personal skills. There is a strong emphasis on the development of personal and social skills to prepare them for work.

123. Target-setting linked to literacy, numeracy and language skills is insufficiently developed. Learners take an initial assessment of their literacy, numeracy and language skills and a diagnostic test. From the results of these, their literacy and numeracy needs are accurately identified. However, no meaningful targets are set to deal with these individual needs, neither are they referenced to the core curriculum. Progress reviews

do not go into detail about the learners' progress towards literacy, numeracy and language skills, and there is too little action-planning to deal with these problems. Schemes of work are referenced to the core curriculum but session plans do not refer to individual learners' needs. There is insufficient use of differentiated learning. Tutors have made some progress in integrating literacy, numeracy and language skills into vocational and other learning. Schemes of work are currently available for bricklaying, joinery, motor vehicle and engineering and more development is planned. There are insufficient other activities to provide evidence of literacy, numeracy and language learning. Tutors do not routinely set vocational tasks that learners could use to collect evidence or practise skills leading to basic skills qualifications.

124. The three core strands of E2E are insufficiently co-ordinated. Each element of the programme is treated as a separate entity and staff do not use the information gained from the elements to create an overall approach to learning and help the learners reach their main learning objectives. Information gathered during progress reviews is not recorded in sufficient detail to support action-planning. Reviews seldom include input from all the learners' tutors. Many actions recorded following progress reviews are insufficiently specific or challenging to the learner. They are not referenced to the main objectives in the programme plan, and it is unclear how they lead to achievement of the objectives. There is not enough team working between the staff involved in the three core strands of E2E, and there are few meetings of all the staff to agree an overall approach to the programme or to discuss the needs of individual learners.

Leadership and management

125. Staff are suitably qualified and have a good understanding of the needs of the E2E learners. Learners' progress is closely monitored by tutors and the E2E manager. The number of E2E learners progressing into further education, training or jobs has increased by 19 per cent during the past year. Staff are able to monitor learners' achievement of each learning objective using effective reports from the management information system. Monthly team meetings are held to review current provision and plan new developments, but the vocational staff who teach E2E learners do not attend these meetings. Equality of opportunity is a regular agenda item at the meetings, and minutes are appropriately recorded. Equality of opportunity is promoted well to learners. It is effectively covered in learners' inductions and is suitably incorporated into the programmes. All staff have a good understanding of equal opportunities and have had a wide range of training. Good support is provided to learners with physical disabilities and sensory impairments. Staff are effectively involved in the self-assessment process and contributed to the final report. The report was accurate in identifying most of the strengths and weaknesses which were found at the reinspection.