

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **GHQ Training Limited**

**10 November 2005**



ADULT LEARNING  
INSPECTORATE

## **Adult Learning Inspectorate**

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

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

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

### **Pre-inspection analysis**

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

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

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

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

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

## Overall effectiveness

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

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

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

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

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

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

## Grading

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

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

# INSPECTION REPORT

## GHQ Training Limited

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## INSPECTION REPORT

### DESCRIPTION OF THE PROVIDER

1. GHQ Training Limited (GHQ) is a private limited company which was established in Plymouth in 1992. It contracts with Devon and Cornwall Learning and Skills Council (LSC) to provide apprenticeships for young people. The company also contracts with Plymouth College of Further Education to provide national vocational qualification (NVQ) training for adults. It also provides training for young people still in education through the Tamar Valley Consortium. GHQ is run by two partners and employs 26 people, eight of whom are full time and 18 are part time.

2. GHQ offers training in hairdressing, management, administration, early years care and education, and customer service. Those learners still in full-time education are offered vocational training in hairdressing.

3. There are several work-based assessors in hairdressing, usually the owners or managers of salons. Off-the-job training is carried out in GHQ's premises in Plymouth city centre. All assessment and internal verification are the responsibility of GHQ.

### OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS

**Grade 2**

4. **The overall effectiveness of the provision is good.** GHQ's leadership and management are good, as are its arrangements for equality of opportunity and quality improvement. In early years and in hairdressing the provision is good.

5. **The inspection team was broadly confident in the reliability of the self-assessment process.** The self-assessment process is inclusive and staff take responsibility for the resulting effective development plan. The company discusses strengths, weaknesses and progress regularly. The self-assessment grades broadly matched all of those given by the inspectors. However, the company identified retention and achievement as a strength, which was not the judgement of inspectors.

6. **The provider has demonstrated that it is in a good position to make improvements.** GHQ has been effective in carrying out actions to promote improvement and the quality of its provision has improved. Proposed actions in the development plan to rectify identified weaknesses are detailed and realistic. However, in hairdressing, action has been ineffective in rectifying a few identified weaknesses.

### KEY CHALLENGES FOR GHQ TRAINING LIMITED:

- raise achievement rates
- continue to strengthen links with employers
- improve responsiveness in rectifying identified issues
- increase opportunity for first-year hairdressing learners to practise on clients

- improve observation of learning

## GRADES

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

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

Health, public services and care			2
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade	
<b>Early years</b>		<b>2</b>	
Apprenticeships for young people	31	2	
NVQ training for young people	25	2	

Retail and commercial enterprise			2
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade	
<b>Hairdressing</b>		<b>2</b>	
Apprenticeships for young people	106	2	
Other government-funded provision	22	2	
NVQ training for young people	14	2	

## ABOUT THE INSPECTION

7. Two of the three areas of learning offered by GHQ were reported on and graded. Evidence was examined from business administration and management, which was not reported on or graded, to support judgements on leadership and management. Inspectors visited GHQ for the three days during the inspection week.

Number of inspectors	4
Number of inspection days	12
Number of learners interviewed	60
Number of staff interviewed	18
Number of employers interviewed	14
Number of locations/sites/learning centres visited	19
Number of partners/external agencies interviewed	1
Number of visits	16

## KEY FINDINGS

### Achievements and standards

8. **In hairdressing there are good achievement rates for learners on NVQ programmes,** with over 80 per cent achieving their qualification in the three years up to 2004. Retention and achievement rates are satisfactory for learners in both early years and hairdressing.

9. **In hairdressing, learners' practical work is of a high standard, using good techniques and demonstrating a high level of professional skill.** In early years, learners gain a wide range of vocational skills. In both hairdressing and early years, most learners are making good progress.

### The quality of provision

Grades given to learning sessions

	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Total
Health, public services and care	0	0	2	0	2
Retail and commercial enterprise	0	7	2	0	9
<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>11</b>

10. **Teaching and learning in hairdressing are good.** Inspectors observed nine sessions, of which seven were judged good and none were unsatisfactory. Learners are challenged and complete complex practical tasks. Teaching is well paced and time is well managed. Tutors encourage group discussion and use good searching questioning techniques to check learning. In early years, teaching and learning are satisfactory.

11. **In both early years and hairdressing, GHQ has very good links and partnership-working with employers.** In hairdressing, employers are well informed, understand well what salon training is taking place and co-ordinate their own training with that at GHQ. In early years, the co-ordination of on- and off-the-job training is good, and learning is effectively reinforced in the workplace through close liaison with employers.

12. **In both early years and hairdressing, GHQ has good resources.** In early years, a wide range of resources is available, and learners use them well. Learners also get a good opportunity to use a range of creative materials to support their learning. In hairdressing, specialist resources and facilities are good. Training salons have the latest equipment and a good supply of products for learners to use. Workplaces are also good and many are high-quality hairdressing salons in prime locations.

13. **Support and guidance for early years learners are particularly good.** Staff are flexible and responsive to the needs of the learners and are particularly skilled at helping to resolve problems that occur in the workplace. Learners appreciate the support that they receive.

### Leadership and management

14. **GHQ manages communication very well.** The company's internal and external communications are very good. Staff communicate well through frequent and well-managed meetings. Employers are well informed and are fully engaged in their learners' progress.

15. **GHQ manages its resources very effectively.** Staff are well qualified and have good development opportunities. The company has a good range of up-to-date equipment and accommodation is well maintained, offering a good learning environment. The company has a broad range of appropriate learning materials.

16. **The company's arrangements for additional literacy, numeracy and language support are good.** Initial assessment identifies learners' additional learning needs and, where required, learners have appropriate time with a suitably qualified tutor. Learners value this additional support.

17. **GHQ manages its equality of opportunity arrangements well.** Its related policies and procedures are thorough and up to date. The company vets work placements appropriately and offers employers free equality and diversity training. GHQ records appropriately issues affecting learners, such as complaints, bullying and harassment, and resolves them quickly and effectively. The company celebrates learners' success well at high-profile events.

18. **The company's quality improvement systems are good.** They are well designed and effective in identifying weaknesses. Staff are closely involved in their development. GHQ uses the management information system effectively to produce good information. The company uses learners' and employers' evaluation feedback to improve its training provision.

19. **GHQ has not adequately dealt with the weaknesses that it identified in its self-assessment report.** For example, there are insufficient observations of GHQ's tutors and salon-based trainers, and in the first year of the course, learners complete too much practical work on each other or on practice heads. GHQ has dealt with identified low levels of internal verification, but at the time of the inspection this matter was still affecting a few learners.

## Leadership and management

### Strengths

- very good communication
- very effective management of resources
- good arrangements for additional literacy, numeracy and language support
- well-managed equality of opportunity arrangements
- good quality improvement systems

### Weaknesses

- no significant weaknesses identified



## **Health, public services and care**

### ***Early years***

**Grade 2**

#### *Strengths*

- good achievement rates for learners on NVQ programmes
- good use of resources
- very good partnership-working with employers
- particularly good support and guidance for learners' vocational and personal needs

#### *Weaknesses*

- no significant weaknesses identified

## **Retail and commercial enterprise**

### ***Hairdressing***

**Grade 2**

#### *Strengths*

- high standard of learners' practical work
- good teaching and learning
- particularly good links with employers
- good resources

#### *Weaknesses*

- insufficient action to rectify learners' identified weaknesses

## **WHAT LEARNERS LIKE ABOUT GHQ TRAINING LIMITED:**

- the friendly, approachable and helpful staff
- individual support
- the good reward system, which is an incentive and motivates them
- the pleasant atmosphere and encouragement to achieve
- 'the way you are treated with respect'

## **WHAT LEARNERS THINK GHQ TRAINING LIMITED COULD IMPROVE:**

- access to the lift
- the amount of salon space in hairdressing
- the number of clients for first-year hairdressing learners
- the facilities for learners at breaks

## DETAILED INSPECTION FINDINGS

### LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

**Grade 2**

#### Strengths

- very good communication
- very effective management of resources
- good arrangements for additional literacy, numeracy and language support
- well-managed equality of opportunity arrangements
- good quality improvement systems

#### Weaknesses

- no significant weaknesses identified

20. GHQ's management of communications is very good. Staff meetings are regular and frequent. Clear agendas are set and the recording of minutes and follow-up actions are good. Training staff meet each month, and teams meet weekly. There are also weekly staff meetings to discuss issues of immediate importance. Informal communication is good and staff work well as a team. Communication with employers is also good. They receive useful and well-prepared information packs at the start of the programme, have regular reports on learners' attendance, are fully engaged in the learners' review process, and receive regular updates from GHQ. Employers speak highly of this frequent communication.

21. GHQ manages its resources very effectively. Staff development is good, with effective appraisal systems and strong encouragement from management for staff development. Staff are well qualified and have appropriate experience. The ratio of training and assessor staff to learners is good. Computers and equipment in the salons are up to date and all accommodation is bright and airy, well maintained and offers a good learning environment. There is a broad range of appropriate learning materials and the product range in hairdressing is good.

22. The arrangements for additional literacy, numeracy and language support are good. A nationally recognised initial assessment tool accurately identifies learners' literacy and numeracy levels. Learners' aspirations and vocational aptitude are also tested in initial assessment. Learners requiring additional learning support have appropriate time planned into their programme with a suitably qualified tutor. Learners value this additional support. GHQ also has bespoke software to support learners with specific learning needs, such as dyslexia.

23. Leadership at GHQ is effective. The business planning is thorough and involves all staff. The company has a clear direction that all of its staff understand. It sets clear targets, both for improved achievement and retention rates and for increased numbers of learners. The organisational structure is appropriate, with well-defined responsibilities. GHQ has good links with a range of organisations, for example the Plymouth training provider network and the local Connexions service. GHQ has invested wisely in data systems. Performance data is readily available. However, in hairdressing it has dealt with a few

identified issues ineffectively and this has had a negative effect on its provision.

## **Equality of opportunity**

## **Contributory grade 2**

24. Equality of opportunity arrangements are well managed. Equality of opportunity and health and safety are the responsibility of one director at GHQ and are given a high priority. Policies and procedures are well written, kept up to date and include all the relevant legislation. A complete range of suitable procedures is in place. All staff are provided with GHQ's equal opportunities policy and attend equal opportunities training. Equality of opportunity is a standard agenda item at the weekly team meetings and monthly staff meetings. Staff understanding and awareness of equality and diversity are good. GHQ holds the well-being and success of the learners as its prime focus. The company vets work placements appropriately and provides employers with its equal opportunities policy within the employer information pack. GHQ offers free training in equality and diversity and health and safety to employers.

25. GHQ covers equality and diversity issues satisfactorily during induction and learners remember these most. Equality of opportunity is discussed at each visit to the workplace. At the 12-weekly progress review, discussions regarding equality and diversity are recorded adequately. Learners' understanding of equality and diversity is satisfactory. GHQ records appropriately, issues affecting learners, such as complaints, bullying or harassment and takes effective and prompt action. The company celebrates learners' success, at a prestigious annual awards evening with other Plymouth-based training providers, with presentations including employers at the provider's premises, and in local newspaper articles. GHQ produces a DVD of the awards ceremony and uses it to promote training to local schools.

26. GHQ has close links with a range of local agencies. For example, it works closely with the local training provider network to ensure appropriate marketing to minority ethnic groups in Plymouth. GHQ is a driving force behind equality and diversity developments within the network. Marketing material is well produced and contains some non-stereotypical images. GHQ markets its provision to a wide range of learners and includes clear commitment in publicity material to cater for all learners. GHQ is committed to widening the participation of learners from under-represented groups. For example, a profoundly deaf learner has, with the provision of a personal signer, achieved an NVQ at level 1 in hairdressing in good time and has progressed to level 2. The company has made efforts to rectify the gender imbalances typical of areas such as hairdressing and childcare. Male learners act as role models to promote training provision at events in local schools and careers conventions. The participation in training of learners from minority ethnic groups reflects their proportion in the local community. The representation of male learners on programmes has shown a small increase every year and is now nearly 8 per cent. With lift and ramped access, the premises are accessible to people with limited mobility, but exiting them in an emergency would require additional arrangements.

27. GHQ inspects workplaces thoroughly for health and safety risk and compliance. It completes a checklist and keeps this on file. Checks include appropriate insurance cover. The company also discusses health and safety with learners at their reviews and records their comments. Health and safety issues are discussed at weekly and monthly meetings. GHQ deals quickly with any issue raised and records any action taken. However, the dispensary is situated on the ground floor and some of the hairdressing sessions take place on upper floors. Hairdressing chemical products are mixed in the dispensary and then

carried up narrow staircases to the upper floor salons. At times, the staircases are busy and this can compromise good health and safety practice.

### **Quality improvement**

### **Contributory grade 2**

28. Quality improvement systems at GHQ are good. Quality improvement retains a high profile in the company. Staff are closely involved in quality development through regular discussion and feedback at staff meetings. The quality assurance systems are well designed and are effective in identifying non-compliance. The company has a comprehensive manual that is available to all staff. It reviews quality assurance policies and procedures regularly. There is a checklist of reviews for each month, with a named member of staff responsible for each element. Monitoring of employers for both health and safety and equality of opportunity is thorough and monitored effectively.

29. The management information system is well managed and suitably sophisticated. The company uses it effectively to produce good information to review all aspects of training. GHQ collects a wide range of information for the purpose of monitoring, trend analysis, development planning and target-setting. It monitors learners' retention and achievement rates and attendance, and identifies trends and year-on-year comparisons. These trends are improving.

30. GHQ uses learners' and employers' evaluation feedback effectively to improve its provision. For example, an improved attendance reporting system has been implemented following employers' feedback and, following learners' feedback, accommodation has been made available for learners to use to relax at lunchtime.

31. The company regards meetings as a valuable resource to discuss issues and improve quality, and these are frequent and well minuted. GHQ assigns actions to specific individuals and follows them up to ensure that they are carried out. There is no central log to monitor and record action taken when learners have made complaints or raised issues. However, these are well recorded in the learners' file and identified and recorded in the appropriate meeting. Staff share good practice continually, but more formally at biannual staff development days. GHQ monitors the effectiveness of quality improvement measures and evaluates them through regular reviews of progress against targets set in the planning process.

32. The self-assessment process is inclusive and has directly led to the production of an effective development plan. Staff take responsibility for the self-assessment report and understand their responsibilities in the development plan. Strengths and weaknesses are discussed regularly at staff meetings. The self-assessment report, although recognising many of the strengths and some of the weaknesses that the inspectors found, identified retention and achievement as a strength, which was not the judgement of the inspectors. Some of the strengths identified are no more than normal practice. The self-assessment grades matched all of those given by inspectors, except in hairdressing, which was judged to be good but self-assessed as satisfactory.

33. Internal verification is generally satisfactory. The company keeps suitable sampling plans up to date. Verification of the learners' portfolios of evidence is carried out both during and at the end of the training programme. Support for work-based assessors is good, and assessment practice is satisfactory. Standardisation meetings take place regularly and include some external work-based assessors. When external verifiers have identified

## GHQ TRAINING LIMITED

action points the company has tackled them promptly. The internal verification process has benefited the learning experience. For example, there are improvements in the use of practical training areas and better learning materials. However, in hairdressing there has recently been insufficient internal verification, especially of work-based assessors, including insufficient lesson observations. GHQ recognises this and has taken action to rectify the issue.

## AREAS OF LEARNING

### Health, public services and care

### Grade 2

Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
<b>Early years</b>		<b>2</b>
Apprenticeships for young people	31	2
NVQ training for young people	25	2

34. Learners are working towards apprenticeships and advanced apprenticeships and NVQs in early years. There are nine learners on advanced apprenticeships and 22 learners on apprenticeships. GHQ provides NVQ-only training for 25 learners from the Plymouth College of Further Education. Eight of these learners are working towards an NVQ at level 2 and 17 learners are working towards an NVQ at level 3. Learners can start at any time of the year. All learners have their suitability assessed by interview and some complete a trial period in a nursery before starting their training programme. Some learners are employed and others gain employment during the period of their training or on completion. Most of the nurseries where the learners work are in and around the Plymouth area. Three key members of staff work as assessors and tutors and carry out internal verification. Learners are recruited through advertisements, through Connexions or schools, and by requests from employers.

#### **Early years**

#### **Grade 2**

##### *Strengths*

- good achievement rates for learners on NVQ programmes
- good use of resources
- very good partnership-working with employers
- particularly good support and guidance for learners' vocational and personal needs

##### *Weaknesses*

- no significant weaknesses identified

### **Achievement and standards**

35. The achievement rates for learners working towards NVQs are good. Eighty-two per cent of learners starting training in the years 2001-04 completed their qualification. Learners who started in 2004-05, and are still in training, are progressing well.

36. The achievement rate for the 31 advanced apprentices starting in 2001-04 is satisfactory. Forty-nine per cent completed their apprenticeship, with eight learners still in learning. The achievement rate for apprentices starting over the same period is also satisfactory, with 50 per cent of learners having completed their framework. For 2003-04, there is potential for improvement, with 46 per cent of learners who completed their apprenticeship and a further 23 per cent still in learning. The retention rate for advanced apprenticeships in 2002-03 is good, with 86 per cent of learners retained on the

programme.

37. Learners gain a wide range of vocational skills and increase their knowledge of childcare. For example, they learn about how children communicate their feelings, how to tell stories well to children and how to manage difficult behaviour. Nursery managers are impressed with the learners' increasing confidence and the new skills that they bring to the workplace. Most learners are making good progress.

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

<b>LSC funded work-based learning</b>																
<b>Advanced apprenticeships</b>	<b>2005-06</b>		<b>2004-05</b>		<b>2003-04</b>		<b>2002-03</b>		<b>2001-02</b>		<b>2000-01</b>					
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number of starts	1		5		11	100	7	100	8	100	3	100				
Retained*	1		4		7	64	6	86	5	62	3	100				
Successfully completed	0		1		3	27	3	43	3	38	2	67				
Still in learning	1		3		4	36	1	14	0	0	0	0				

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

<b>LSC funded work-based learning</b>																
<b>Apprenticeships</b>	<b>2005-06</b>		<b>2004-05</b>		<b>2003-04</b>		<b>2002-03</b>		<b>2001-02</b>		<b>2000-01</b>					
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number of starts	1		23		13	100	21	100	15	100	8	100				
Retained*	0		19		10	77	12	57	9	60	7	88				
Successfully completed	0		1		6	46	9	43	5	33	7	88				
Still in learning	1		18		3	23	0	0	0	0	0	0				

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

<b>LSC funded work-based learning</b>																
<b>NVQ Training</b>	<b>2005-06</b>		<b>2004-05</b>		<b>2003-04</b>		<b>2002-03</b>		<b>2001-02</b>		<b>2000-01</b>					
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number of starts	13		16	100	10	100	11	100	1	100	0	100				
Retained*	0		12	75	7	70	10	91	1	100	0	100				
Successfully completed	0		2	12	7	70	10	91	1	100	0	100				
Still in learning	13		12	75	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	100				

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

### The quality of provision

38. Most of the strengths identified in the reinspection report have been maintained and there have been further improvements to the quality of training. Other areas are now satisfactory. The previous weakness of slow progress for some learners has been resolved. GHQ now has a range of strategies to provide support for any learners who are making slow progress.



39. GHQ use its resources well to benefit the learners. A wide range of resources is available, including journals, magazines, books, computers and access to the internet. Learners use these well for researching topics. The company encourages learners to use the internet and computers for their work. Learners get good opportunities to use a range of creative materials to support their learning. They regularly use paints, modelling material, card and tissue to create innovative aids for their work with children. Staff are very experienced in childcare work and have a good understanding of the NVQ. They are motivated and enthusiastic and have achieved teaching qualifications or are working towards them. GHQ recognised the expertise of its staff in its most recent self-assessment report. Accommodation is comfortable and recently updated, with washable floors that are conducive to early years training. The nurseries in which the learners work are of a good quality and well equipped. Staff are welcoming and very friendly.

40. GHQ has developed very good partnership-working with employers, which benefits the learners. Employers speak highly of staff at GHQ and describe them as reliable, friendly and thorough. Assessors communicate regularly with managers of nurseries and keep them well informed of the learners' progress and development needs. Co-ordination of on- and off-the-job training is good, and GHQ encourages employers to ensure that the learners have opportunities to practise skills that they will be assessed on. Learning is effectively reinforced in the workplace through close team-working with employers. GHQ offers employers training in health and in exploring further opportunities for joint working. The company identified its good links with employers as a strength in its most recent self-assessment report.

41. Vocational and personal support for learners are particularly good. Staff visit learners and carry out observations of practice at times to suit the nursery and the learners. Learners can call into the office to see staff at any time and they have their mobile telephone numbers. The three staff members work as a team and are responsive to the needs of all the learners and employers. Information leaflets are available on a range of health topics, and learners appreciate the support that they receive. GHQ's staff are particularly skilled at helping to resolve any problems that occur in the workplace. This includes changing work placements where necessary and resolving workplace misunderstandings promptly. GHQ motivates learners well and has introduced a reward system that rewards learners financially for every unit achieved, on completion of four months' training and for completing by the expected end date. Good pastoral support was noted in the self-assessment report.

42. The company provides good support for the learners' literacy and numeracy needs, which it identifies well at initial assessment. Learners receive extra individual support from the assessors or have specialist input from a basic skills tutor who provides good sessions on one day each week.

43. Induction is satisfactory and takes place over half a day. Assessment is timely, well planned and recorded. Assessment methods are varied and include a good number of observations of practice. Regular reviews of progress take place and involve employers well. Targets are set in action plans and recent records have more specific targets with dates for completion identified. GHQ does not always record areas for learners to improve following observations of practice, but it usually provides this in verbal feedback.

44. Learners receive good opportunities for additional training in first aid and food hygiene. Satisfactory off-the-job training takes place either during the day or in the evenings in small groups. It is varied, and enthusiastic staff make it interesting. Staff use clear lesson plans and make good links with the NVQ. Learners enjoy the training. Key skills are introduced at the start of the apprenticeship and are well integrated with the NVQ. Learners receive a good level of support for key skills and most find the teaching useful and enjoyable.

### **Leadership and management**

45. GHQ provides flexible provision to meet the needs of the learners and the employers. The company offers training sessions in the evening and during the weekdays to fit in with employment patterns.

46. Staff are well motivated and committed to their roles. They have good access to training and development and are experienced in many aspects of early years work. Effective and frequent communication between staff and employers promote good management of the programme and promote good assessment practice.

47. GHQ provides equal opportunities and diversity to learners throughout their training and reinforces them at reviews and through a variety of posters and leaflets displayed in the training room. Learners have a good understanding of equality of opportunity, their employment rights and how to make a complaint. GHQ promotes the learners' good health through making leaflets available on a range of topics, including sexual health.

**Retail and commercial enterprise****Grade 2**

<b>Contributory areas:</b>	<b>Number of learners</b>	<b>Contributory grade</b>
<b><i>Hairdressing</i></b>		<b>2</b>
Apprenticeships for young people	106	2
Other government-funded provision	22	2
NVQ training for young people	14	2

48. GHQ provides ladies' and men's hairdressing training in and around Plymouth. Vocational training takes place on the job in 50 commercial hairdressing salons. Key skills and off-the-job training take place in GHQ's training centre in Plymouth. Learners attend the training centre one day each week. There are a total of 142 learners on hairdressing training programmes, of whom 101 are on the apprenticeship and five are on the advanced apprenticeship. Fourteen franchised learners from the local college of further education are on NVQ-only programmes. Twenty-two young people attend training while in full-time education. All advanced apprentices are employed. The apprenticeship programme is planned to last 24 months and the advanced apprenticeship 18 months. Of the 11 staff, four are full time and seven are part time. There are 13 qualified work-based assessors.

***Hairdressing*****Grade 2***Strengths*

- high standard of learners' practical work
- good teaching and learning
- particularly good links with employers
- good resources

*Weaknesses*

- insufficient action to rectify learners' identified weaknesses

**Achievement and standards**

49. Learners' practical work is of a high standard. For example, in one practical lesson learners working towards an NVQ at level 2 showed their competence by using good techniques when completing double-colouring effects. Learners demonstrated good understanding of the sectioning required and good control when applying products. Learners working towards NVQs at level 3 produce good photographic evidence of currently fashionable hairstyles. Other learners demonstrate good professional skills when completing weave colours and permanent waving. Learners work with confidence and adopt good professional working practice.

50. Achievement and retention rates are satisfactory. Of those learners starting the advanced apprenticeship in the two years 2001-03, 55 per cent completed the full apprenticeship framework. The retention rate on the advanced apprenticeship for the four years to 2004 is nearly 60 per cent. Of those starting the apprenticeship programme in the three years to 2003, 42 per cent completed their framework, with six learners still in

learning. NVQ completion rates in the three years to 2004 averaged just over 40 per cent.

51. Retention rates on the apprenticeship programme for the three years to 2004 averaged 52 per cent. Over 70 per cent of learners starting in the past three years have completed or are still in learning. Most current learners are making satisfactory or good progress and are on target to achieve their planned outcomes. The achievement of key skills is planned to be completed in the learners' first year and learners are making satisfactory progress towards this.

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

<b>LSC funded work-based learning</b>																
<b>Advanced apprenticeships</b>	<b>2005-06</b>		<b>2004-05</b>		<b>2003-04</b>		<b>2002-03</b>		<b>2001-02</b>							
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number of starts	1		1		5	100	9	100	13	100						
Retained*	0		0		3	60	5	56	7	54						
Successfully completed	0		0		0	0	5	56	7	54						
Still in learning	1		1		3	60	0	0	0	0						

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

<b>LSC funded work-based learning</b>																
<b>Apprenticeships</b>	<b>2005-06</b>		<b>2004-05</b>		<b>2003-04</b>		<b>2002-03</b>		<b>2001-02</b>		<b>2000-01</b>					
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number of starts	11		75		58	100	61	100	54	100	18	100				
Retained*	0		15		34	59	26	43	30	56	14	78				
Successfully completed	0		3		4	7	16	26	23	43	9	50				
Still in learning	11		54		30	52	6	10	0	0	0	0				

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

<b>LSC funded work-based learning</b>																
<b>NVQ Training</b>	<b>2005-06</b>		<b>2004-05</b>		<b>2003-04</b>		<b>2002-03</b>		<b>2001-02</b>		<b>2000-01</b>					
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number of starts	11		13		7	100	13	100	16	100	6	100				
Retained*	0		10		4	57	10	77	15	94	6	100				
Successfully completed	0		5		3	43	5	38	7	44	4	67				
Still in learning	11		3		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0				

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

## The quality of provision

52. Teaching and learning are good. Inspectors observed nine sessions, of which seven were judged good and none were unsatisfactory. In the best lessons, learners are challenged and complete complex practical tasks, for example advanced colouring. Juniors assist stylists and complete good assessments. The tutor acts as a facilitator and the

teaching is well paced and time is well managed. In the best background knowledge lessons, GHQ encourages group discussions and uses good searching questioning techniques to check learning. In the poorer lessons, learners are not sufficiently challenged, with insufficient variety in teaching and learning strategies to stimulate them.

53. GHQ's links with employers are particularly good. The staff visit employers on average once each month and more frequently for learners who have particular assessment needs. Employers are well informed about changes in programme specifications and updated regularly. Employers are sent work plans so that GHQ can co-ordinate salon-training sessions. All employers provide training in the workplace and most have designated weekly training sessions. Most employers' training is co-ordinated with the training given at GHQ's training centre. GHQ's staff deal efficiently and effectively with any problems that employers experience and all employers are impressed with the level of support that they receive from the company.

54. Guidance and support are good. The company identifies learners' literacy and numeracy support needs at induction and refers those needing extra support to a specialist support tutor at GHQ. These learners attend weekly to receive this support. Learners also receive good support through effective individual coaching from tutors. Learners are aware of how to ask for support and do so if they need it.

55. Specialist resources and facilities are good. GHQ's training centre is modern and has good décor and lighting. Training salons have the latest equipment and a good supply of products for learners to work with. Rooms used for background knowledge teaching are spacious and there is good access to computers, but rooms used for practical work are small. GHQ also stages a good annual hairdressing competition, which is well supported by salon work-placement providers and learners. Workplaces are good. Many of them are high-quality hairdressing salons in prime locations that give learners the opportunity for training and assessment on a diverse range of clients. Most have a good corporate image, with the latest modern equipment and facilities with extensive ranges of high-quality products for use in the salon and for retail. In some salons there is access to computer facilities in the reception areas. Work placements provide good learning environments and learners have the ability to observe good skills at work through access to experienced stylists. Many senior stylists act as role models.

56. Assessment at GHQ is satisfactory and meets awarding body criteria. Most learners' assessment takes place off the job in GHQ's training centre, with some on the job in the workplace. Monitoring of learners' progress is satisfactory. Target-setting is satisfactory and learners are well aware of the assessments they need for unit completion. However, the inspectors observed some poor assessment practice. For example, some learners did not have their assessment record books, and targets do not always have specific dates identified for completion.

### **Leadership and management**

57. Staff development is good. GHQ plans general staff development that meets the needs of the company and specific vocational development that meets tutors' needs. For example, staff have attended a manufacturers' hair-colouring course in Holland and other staff have attended specialist cutting courses. Equality of opportunity is satisfactory. Staff are enthusiastic and have a strong sense of purpose. They have a good awareness of management decisions. The self-assessment report is generally accurate, but inspectors

identified some strengths and weakness not identified by GHQ.

58. GHQ has not sufficiently dealt with weaknesses that the company identified in its most recent self-assessment report. For example, there are insufficient observations of GHQ's tutors and salon-based trainers, and learners in the first year of the course have insufficient opportunity to be assessed in GHQ's training centre, with insufficient models and most practical work completed on each others or on practice heads. Low levels of internal verification were also identified in the self-assessment report. GHQ has rectified this problem but, at the time of the inspection, some learners are still waiting for work to be verified and the quality of some work-based assessors' assessments has not been verified.

