

INSPECTION REPORT

Birmingham Electrical Training Ltd

11 May 2006



ADULT LEARNING
INSPECTORATE

Adult Learning Inspectorate

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

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

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

Pre-inspection analysis

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

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

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

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

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

Overall effectiveness

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

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

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

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

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

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

Grading

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

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

INSPECTION REPORT

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INSPECTION REPORT

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROVIDER

1. Birmingham Electrical Training Ltd (BET) was established in 1991. BET is a private limited company which is located in a specialist training centre in Hockley, Birmingham. The company provides work-based learning in electrical installation. The company also offers specialist commercial training in the installation and commissioning of electrical and electro-technical systems and equipment, information and communications technology, management, and health and safety. Three directors are responsible for the company. The director of training, the contracts manager, the training manager and the senior tutor look after the management and provision of work-based learning. Off-the-job training is provided by a team of seven tutors and through a subcontracted arrangement with City College, Birmingham. Training in the workplace is provided by employers and is overseen by BET's team of seven training officers. The office manager and two administrators provide administrative support.

2. BET has a contract with the Birmingham and Solihull learning and Skills Council (LSC) to provide advanced apprenticeships and national vocational qualifications (NVQ) training. BET is accredited with the Investors in People standard, which is a national standard for improving an organisations performance through its people.

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS

Grade 2

3. **The overall effectiveness of the provision is good.** BET's arrangements for leadership and management and quality improvement are good. The arrangements for equality of opportunity are satisfactory. In construction, planning and the built environment, the provision is good.

4. **The inspection team was broadly confident in the reliability of the self-assessment process.** The self-assessment process and report provides an accurate assessment of BET's strengths and weaknesses. Staff, learners and employers' views contribute effectively to the process. However, the text does not provide sufficient evidence to support judgements. The report has a detailed and clear development plan.

5. **The provider has demonstrated that it is in a good position to make improvements.** BET has good and well-recorded quality improvement arrangements which are regularly reviewed and updated. These arrangements have ensured that the training has improved and that the retention and success rates have increased since the previous inspection.

KEY CHALLENGES FOR BIRMINGHAM ELECTRICAL TRAINING LTD:

- maintain and continue to increase success rates
- maintain learners' good progression
- maintain and improve good training

- increase the involvement of employers in the planning and monitoring of training
- improve the co-ordination between on- and off-the-job training
- establish effective and systematic lesson observation arrangements
- continue to implement arrangements to improve the quality of provision
- maintain and improve equality of opportunity

GRADES

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

Grades awarded at inspection

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

Construction, planning and the built environment			2
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade	
Building services		2	
Apprenticeships for young people	315	2	
NVQ training for young people	3	2	

ABOUT THE INSPECTION

6. This was the second inspection of BET. Building services, electrical installation was inspected and graded as well as leadership and management.

Number of inspectors	4
Number of inspection days	16
Number of learners interviewed	28
Number of staff interviewed	12
Number of employers interviewed	13
Number of subcontractors interviewed	1
Number of locations/sites/learning centres visited	13

KEY FINDINGS

Achievements and standards

7. **Current learners are making good progress towards completion of the framework.**

Nearly all learners who started in 2002-03 and who are due to complete in 2005-06, have achieved the technical certificate and are very close to achieving the NVQ and key skills. Learners who started in 2003-04, 2004-05 and 2005-06 are making good progress towards achieving the different parts of the framework. Since the previous inspection, the proportion of learners who have left their training early has declined from 40 per cent to 15 per cent.

8. Success rates are satisfactory for advanced apprentices and NVQ learners for 2003-04 and 2004-05. Since the previous inspection, success rates have increased by at least 25 per cent. The success rates for NVQ learners are better than for advanced apprentices. Between 2003-04 and 2004-05, there was some decline in success rates for advanced apprentices.

9. Most learners have satisfactory to good skills and knowledge in electrical installation. Learners produce comprehensive portfolios and log books. Written responses to tests and questions are accurate and thorough. Learners have an appropriate awareness of health and safety.

The quality of provision

Grades given to learning sessions

	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Total
Construction, planning and the built environment	0	4	0	0	4
Total	0	4	0	0	4

10. **Training is good, particularly the off-the-job training.** Well-planned lessons have a strong practical focus and make good use of the tutors' and learners' workplace experience. In most workplaces, learners have good on-the-job training from experienced and committed supervisors. However, on some sites, learners do not always develop skills effectively.

11. **Progress reviews are particularly effective in improving progress.** Review paperwork is thorough. Training officers ask challenging questions to assess learners' understanding of progress and provide precise learning targets. Learners are able to describe their progress very effectively and what action they need to take to improve.

12. **Resources are good.** Spacious workshops include a good range of tools and equipment. Classrooms are well decorated and well equipped. Most workplaces have a range of good equipment for learners to use. Tutors and training officers have strong occupational skills and are well qualified to train, assess and support learners.

13. **BET provides a wide range of particularly useful additional courses for learners,** before and after their training. Pre-enrolment provision includes taster programmes, key stage 4 apprenticeships and, in partnership with a local college, foundation programmes in electrical installation. BET also offers training in electrical inspection, testing and wiring.

14. **Staff provide prospective apprentices with comprehensive information, advice and guidance.** The company does not have established arrangements for careers guidance, but this does take place through individual discussions between learners and training officers. BET supports the small number of learners who have additional needs well. Staff provide

helpful personal support to learners.

15. Although supervisors provide good training to develop learners' occupational skills, most are insufficiently involved in the planning and monitoring of training in the workplace. Employers' understanding of the advanced apprenticeship is not strong.

Leadership and management

16. **BET has a clear and particularly effective strategic direction** to provide good training in electrical installation. The mission statement strongly promotes the company's values and direction. BET's thorough strategic and development plans have a clear focus on the needs of learners, employers and the LSC.

17. **Management of provision is good.** Since the previous inspection, managers have transformed standards from inadequate to good. Good arrangements are in place to plan and provide good off-the-job training. BET uses mostly employers who can provide good training in the workplace. Managers and staff closely monitor learners' performance. Good staff development concentrates on regular updating of staff training and occupational skills.

18. **The management of resources is good.** Managers have ensured that the significant investment in resources provides learners with good facilities. The company only subcontracts with City College, Birmingham who provides BET's learners with good resources related to its centre of vocational excellence (CoVE) status. BET works mostly with employers who have good resources. The company only employs staff who have strong industrial experience and who are well qualified.

19. **BET takes particularly effective action to increase participation from minority ethnic communities.** BET strongly promotes electrical installation training in schools which have high proportions of students from minority ethnic groups, as well as women-only schools. Marketing materials make good use of images and language to encourage applications from under-represented groups.

20. **BET has good and regularly reviewed arrangements to improve the quality of provision** for learners. Managers use data effectively to monitor and improve learners' performance. Managers regularly compare performance with other providers. Meetings, appraisals and staff development have a very clear focus on improving standards.

21. **BET has thorough arrangements to collect and respond to learners and employers' views.** The surveys clearly focus on training and support for learners and the needs of employers. Managers have good and effective arrangements to respond to feedback from learners and employers.

22. **BET has established arrangements to set targets for success rates.** However, targets do not take account of the differences between groups of learners and employers. When setting targets, managers and staff consider the need to increase success rates, learners' previous performance and national success rates.

23. **Managers manage literacy, numeracy and language support effectively.** Learners who have additional needs are given the necessary support. BET does not have a written

strategy or plan for the implementation of literacy, numeracy, and language support.

24. **Data management is effective.** BET collects a wide range of information on learners' performance and progress and managers use it to provide good reports. If the data indicates problems with a learner, BET takes action to remedy it.

25. Most learners have a satisfactory to good understanding of equal opportunities. Reinforcement of learners' understanding of equality at progress reviews varies.

26. **Training officers check regularly that learners have not been subject to harassment or discrimination.** Problems are discussed with employers and are resolved.

27. **BET has comprehensive arrangements for equality of opportunity.** Staff receive regular training to improve their understanding of the topic. Equality is an agenda item at meetings, but discussion on this area is minimal.

28. **Internal verification ensures that assessment is accurate.** Internal verifiers use effective procedures to check the arrangements for assessment and the quality of assessors' work.

29. **The self-assessment process and report provides an accurate assessment of BET's strengths and weaknesses.** All staff, learners and employers are fully involved in the process. However, the text does not provide sufficient evidence to support judgements. The report has a detailed and clear development plan.

30. **Co-ordination between the background knowledge training and on-the-job training is good.** However, the off-the-job training is not well co-ordinated. BET has no system to inform employers when a new skill has been taught so that learners can develop and reinforce this new skill in the workplace.

31. **BET's arrangements to assess the quality of teaching and learning are ineffective.** BET has no systematic arrangements to observe lessons at its training centre and the subcontractor's premises. Occasionally observations take place.

Leadership and management

Strengths

- clear and particularly effective strategic direction
- good management of provision
- good management of resources
- particularly effective action to improve participation of learners from minority ethnic communities
- good arrangements for quality improvement
- thorough arrangements to collect and respond to the views of learners and employers

Weaknesses

- insufficient co-ordination of on- and off-the-job practical training
- no systematic arrangements to observe learning

Construction, planning and the built environment

Building services

Strengths

- good progress by current learners
- good training
- particularly effective progress reviews
- good resources
- wider range of additional courses

Weaknesses

- insufficient involvement by employers in the planning and monitoring of training

WHAT LEARNERS LIKE ABOUT BIRMINGHAM ELECTRICAL TRAINING LTD:

- very good teaching
- better teaching than at school
- good balance of theory and practical work
- tutors with experience of electrical installation
- block periods of training better than day release
- good support in finding a new job
- they take a real interest in you as a person
- really good support from training officers
- good workshops at the BET training centre

WHAT LEARNERS THINK BIRMINGHAM ELECTRICAL TRAINING LTD COULD IMPROVE:

- more space in the training centre's canteen
- insufficient parking at the training centre
- long hours on site
- occasional lack of materials in the workshops

DETAILED INSPECTION FINDINGS

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Grade 2

Strengths

- clear and particularly effective strategic direction
- good management of provision
- good management of resources
- particularly effective action to improve participation of learners from minority ethnic communities
- good arrangements for quality improvement
- thorough arrangements to collect and respond to the views of learners and employers

Weaknesses

- insufficient co-ordination of on- and off-the-job practical training
- no systematic arrangements to observe learning

32. BET has a clear and particularly effective strategic direction to provide good training for the electrical installation industry. Establishing the strategic direction involves directors, managers and staff, and consultation with employers and the local LSC. The mission statement strongly promotes the company's values and direction. BET's strategic and development plans support the mission and strategic direction, and have a clear focus on the needs of the learners, and the priorities of employers and the LSC locally and regionally for well-qualified electrical installation workers. Plans are comprehensive and include clear objectives, actions, impact measures, priorities, targets, dates and responsibilities. Targets in the strategic plan cover success rates for the framework, NVQs, technical certificates and key skills. Actions have clear statements on how they will be achieved. However, managers have not recorded the progress the company is making with action points in the development plan.

33. Management of provision is good. Since the previous inspection, managers have transformed the standard of provision from inadequate to good. Signed and written agreements set out clearly what BET expects employers and the subcontractor to provide. A range of useful and effective arrangements are in place to plan training including the use of good individual learning plans, lesson plans and schemes of work. The company only uses employers who can provide good training opportunities. BET checks thoroughly to ensure that these good opportunities remain in place. Subcontractors who cannot provide the standard required by the company have their agreement terminated. Training at the centre, with the subcontractor and with most of the employers is good. Training officers and tutors review the learners' progress closely and take prompt action to remedy problems. Managers carefully monitor learners' performance to ensure that they are making good progress towards the achievement of performance outcomes, NVQ units and the different stages of the apprenticeship. Meetings have a clear focus on learning and particularly those learners who are having difficulty progressing. Good staff development activities ensure that staff have good training skills, and regularly update their occupational

knowledge and skills.

34. The management of resources is good. Managers have ensured the significant investment BET has made in resources provides learners with good facilities. The company only subcontracts with City College, Birmingham who provides BET's learners with good resources related to its CoVE status. BET works mostly with employers that have good resources. The company only employs training officers and tutors who have strong industrial experience, are well qualified occupationally and have relevant teaching, training and assessment qualifications.

35. BET has effective arrangements to set targets for success rates for frameworks, NVQs, technical certificates and key skills. Each training officer has targets for their learners. However, these targets do not take account of differences between groups of learners and employers. When setting targets, managers and staff consider the need to increase success rates, learners' previous performance, national success rates for construction and building services and the LSC's requirements to raise levels of success.

36. BET has clear arrangements to manage literacy, numeracy and language support. Staff initially assess all learners to ensure that they have appropriate standards of education and skills, and an aptitude for electrical installation work. Only occasionally do learners need additional help with literacy, numeracy and language or support with dyslexia. Those who have support needs are given help by BET. The company does not have a written strategy or plan for the implementation of literacy, numeracy, and language support and does not produce written reports on the effectiveness of the support it provides for learners.

37. The management of data is effective. BET collects a wide range of information on learners which covers gender, ethnicity, additional learning requirements, disability, starts, withdrawals, and achievement of qualifications and frameworks. The company has comprehensive records on learners' progress. Managers use the information to provide good reports on how well learners are performing and progressing. If the data indicates a problem, BET takes action to remedy it.

38. Co-ordination between the background knowledge training and on-the-job training is good. However, the off-the-job training is not well co-ordinated. BET has no system to inform employers when a new skill has been taught so that learners can develop and reinforce this new skill in the workplace. The self-assessment report identifies this problem and managers have started discussions with employers to resolve it.

Equality of opportunity

Contributory grade 3

39. BET takes particularly effective action to improve participation by people from minority ethnic communities. Sixteen per cent of learners are from minority ethnic communities, which is higher than normally found in the electrical installation industry and double the proportion from three years' earlier. BET strongly promotes electrical installation training in schools which have a high proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups, and at women-only schools. Staff and managers attend a range of events and industry days to promote careers in electrical installation. They work closely with staff at the local LSC and other construction providers on initiatives to widen participation. BET has produced new marketing information which includes images and language to encourage applications from under-represented groups. The company works hard to promote careers in electrical installation to women, including the use of successful female role models, but the

proportion of women in training remains very low.

40. Most learners have a satisfactory to good understanding of equal opportunities. They are aware of their responsibility to others with whom they work and train. Reinforcement of learners' understanding of equal opportunities at progress reviews varies. At some, the discussions are challenging and stimulating, but others are not. The self-assessment report identifies this as a problem. Training officers check at progress reviews that learners have not been subject to harassment or discrimination at work. Learners know what to do if unfairly treated. In the very few instances of harassment, training officers discuss this with employers and resolve the problem.

41. BET has a comprehensive equal opportunities policy which is supported by detailed procedures. Staff regularly receive training to improve their understanding of equality. It is an agenda item at meetings, but discussion on this area is minimal. The company provides employers with a blank equal opportunities policy to adapt if they do not have one.

Quality improvement

Contributory grade 2

42. BET has good arrangements to improve the quality of provision for learners. Since the previous inspection, the company has introduced new quality improvement arrangements. These arrangements have ensured that the training in work skills and theory is good. Key skills tuition is now well organised and links very effectively with vocational training. Success rates for NVQs, key skills, technical certificates and frameworks have significantly increased since the previous inspection, and a higher proportion of learners remain in training. The company has stopped subcontracting with other providers and does not use employers that do not meet its standards. Arrangements for quality improvement include a quality improvement framework, a policy and written procedures for the different parts of the company's work. The written procedures cover thoroughly all aspects of the programme from recruitment, through the provision of training, to completion. Managers review and update arrangements each year to ensure effectiveness. Managers support the quality improvement arrangements by good use of data to monitor and improve learners' performance. Meetings, appraisals and staff development have a very clear focus on improving provision. Managers regularly compare performance against other local providers and those in the building service sector by the use of inspection reports, information from the local LSC and data on success rates.

43. BET has well established and thorough arrangements to collect and respond to learners' and employers' views. The company collects learners' views annually and the results are analysed. Managers adjust questionnaires to take account of the different stages learners are at on the apprenticeship programme. Questions have a clear focus on the quality of training and supporting learners. Each learner who responds to the questionnaire has an individual response, and all learners have a summary of responses with a list of the key issues. Training officers collect learners' views at progress reviews and if there are problems, swift action is taken to resolve them. BET also collects views from employers each year and after analysis of the responses, writes to each employer on the outcomes. BET also visits the employers every three months to check that they are satisfied with the performance of the provider. Results from questionnaires indicate that 90 per cent of employers and learners have a positive view on the company's work and 5 per cent have a less than satisfactory opinion.

44. BET's effective procedures for internal verification ensure that assessment is fair and

accurate. Internal verifiers are appropriately qualified and experienced. Internal verifiers prepare sampling plans and schedules to ensure regular checking of assessment. They provide assessors with regular feedback on the different methods of assessment they use. Assessors and internal verifiers meet regularly to make sure assessment is consistent and of an appropriate standard, and to discuss information from awarding bodies and other external organisations. Reports from external verifiers are positive about BET's internal verification and assessment methods.

45. The self-assessment process and report provides an accurate assessment of BET's strengths and weaknesses. Directors, managers and staff are fully involved in self-assessment through discussions on what went well and what needs to improve. Learners' and employers' views effectively contribute to the self-assessment process through questionnaires. The self-assessment report is informative and critical, but the text is descriptive and does not provide sufficient evidence to support judgements. The report has a detailed and clear development plan.

46. BET's arrangements to assess the quality of teaching and learning are ineffective. BET has no systematic arrangements to observe lessons at its training centre or at the subcontractors. Occasionally observations take place.

AREAS OF LEARNING

Construction, planning and the built environment

Grade 2

Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Building services		2
Apprenticeships for young people	315	2
NVQ training for young people	3	2

47. BET has 315 advanced apprentices in electrical installation and three NVQ learners. All learners are employed. Advanced apprentices and NVQ learners work towards the NVQ in electrical installation at level 3. Advanced apprentices also work towards key skills and technical certificates. BET provides additional courses for learners on electrical inspection, testing and wiring regulations. All learners have an induction and carry out an initial assessment to identify additional needs in literacy, numeracy and language skills. The company provides off-the-job training at its training centre in Hockley or at City College, Birmingham. On-the-job training takes place at employers' sites. Progress reviews take place every 10 weeks. Three per cent of the learners are women and 16 per cent are from minority ethnic communities.

Building services

Strengths

- good progress by current learners
- good training
- particularly effective progress reviews
- good resources
- wider range of additional courses

Weaknesses

- insufficient involvement by employers in the planning and monitoring of training

Achievement and standards

48. Current learners are making good progress towards the advanced apprenticeship framework. Nearly all learners who started in 2002-03 and are due to complete in 2005-06, have achieved the technical certificate and have either achieved or are very close to achieving the NVQ at level 3 and the key skills within the planned timescale. Learners who started in 2003-04 are making very good progress towards the technical certificates and the key skills. Learners who started in 2004-05 and 2005-06, are making good progress towards achievement of different framework elements. The proportion of learners who have left early since the previous inspection has declined from 40 per cent to 15 per cent.

49. Success rates are satisfactory for advanced apprentices and NVQ learners for 2003-04

and 2004-05. Since the previous inspection, success rates have increased by at least 25 per cent. The success rates for NVQ learners are better than for advanced apprentices. Between 2003-04 and 2004-05, there was some decline in success rates for advanced apprentices, as some learners worked for companies that ceased trading and they had to make learners redundant. BET was able to find new employers for some learners, but not for all, and this affected the success rates for 2004-05.

50. Most learners have satisfactory or better skills and knowledge of electrical installation and this is used effectively in a variety of domestic, commercial and industrial work settings. Learners produce comprehensive portfolios and log books for the NVQ and the technical certificate. Their written responses to tests and questions are accurate and thorough. Learners have an appropriate awareness of health and safety.

Programme	End Year	Success Rate	No, of learners	Provider NVQ Rate	National NVQ Rate	Provider framework rate	National framework rate
Advanced Apprenticeships	2003-04	overall	56	54	51	48	26
		timely	48	38	36	38	17
	2004-05	overall	66	41	55	41	40
		timely	118	9	33	9	22
NVQ training for young	2003-04	overall	35	51	24	0	0
		timely	38	29	16	0	0
	2004-05	overall	30	57	46	0	0
		timely	30	17	22	0	0

For details of how to calculate overall and timely success rates please refer to the "Quality Improvement Pack" (available from the Learning and Skills Council's website: www.lsc.gov.uk).

The quality of provision

51. Training is good. Off-the-job training at BET's training centre and at City College, Birmingham is of a high standard. Apprentices attend for blocks of full-time training in their first and second years. Tutors make good use of their extensive experience in the electrical installation industry. Lessons are well planned, have a strong practical focus and make good use of learners' experience in the workplace. Tutors engage the interest of the learners well and they participate strongly in lessons. Workshop sessions are well organised with clear information and instructions for the learners. Learners start by being taught to install simple circuits and move to more complex domestic and industrial circuits and cabling. Tutors provide particularly effective lessons for key skills. They make very good use of the electrical installation topics to give key skills teaching and assignments relevance and meaning. Inspectors identified that the appointment of dedicated staff for key skills has made a significant improvement in the timely achievement of key skills. In the workplace, learners receive good on-the-job training from experienced and mostly committed supervisors. Supervisors pass on their knowledge and competence to develop learners' skills to the standard required by industry. Most employers' sites provide a range of good training opportunities for learners. On some sites learners do not always develop skills effectively, particularly where subcontracted workers are not prepared to give their time.

52. Reviews are good and particularly effective in supporting learners' progress. Review paperwork is comprehensive and thorough. It covers all aspects of learning including work skills, equal opportunities and health and safety. Training officers ask challenging questions to assess learners' understanding of how they are progressing and what they need to do to improve their work. During discussions with training officers, learners are able to describe very effectively their progress to date and what action they need to take to reach the next stage of the programme. Training officers set clear and precise short- and medium-term targets, with clear dates for completion. After each visit, training officers provide managers with clear reports on learners' progress. Managers and training officers discuss the learners who are making slow progress and take effective action to remedy the problem. Assessment of learners' work is fair and accurate.

53. Resources are good. Accommodation and equipment are of a high standard. BET has invested substantially to expand and develop its training centre. Workshops are spacious and have good, up-to-date tools and equipment. Classrooms are well decorated and well equipped with good furniture and information and learning technologies. The subcontractors' resources are also good, particularly related to the CoVE status. BET has a nationally recognised electrical test centre which learners use, although waiting times for learners to take tests are long. Tutors and training officers have good occupational skills and understanding and they are well qualified to train, assess and support learners. Most workplaces have a range of good or better equipment for learners to use.

54. BET provides a wide range of particularly useful additional courses for learners, before and after training. Pre-enrolment provision includes a taster programme at a local school and the key stage 4 apprenticeships. BET, in partnership with employers, runs a 12-week taster programme, combining off-the-job training and work experience. A collaborative arrangement with a local college provides an introductory foundation programme in electrical installation. The programme includes occupational and key skills training, background knowledge and an enrichment programme. BET also offers further training and qualifications in electrical inspection, testing and wiring. The achievement of these additional qualifications provides learners with a range of extra work skills and knowledge which employers find very useful.

55. Information, advice and guidance is satisfactory. BET's staff provide prospective apprentices, comprehensive information, advice and guidance about training and careers in electrical installation. Staff emphasise the long working hours, working away from home, and the dirty and cold working conditions that are sometimes a feature of electrical installation work. The company does not have established arrangements for careers advice and guidance, but this does take place through individual discussions between learners and training officers. BET supports the small number of learners who have additional needs and dyslexia well. Training officers provide personal support to learners and this is valued.

56. Although supervisors provide good training for learners to develop occupational skills, most are insufficiently involved in the planning and monitoring of training in the workplace. The planning which does take place is through an assessment by the training officer and the learner, with only a partial involvement from supervisors. Employers' understanding of the advanced apprenticeship is not strong.

Leadership and management

57. Since the previous inspection, managers have made significant improvements in the management of electrical installation training. Success rates and progress by learners during their training has improved. Although a problem remains about some aspects of the planning and co-ordination of practical training, learners receive good on- and off-the-job training. Managers have discontinued work with subcontractors who did not provide the standard required by BET. BET learners rarely face discrimination or harassment and the company has taken significant action to improve participation of under-represented groups. The stronger quality improvement arrangements have provided learners with increasingly better provision. Self-assessment is rigorous and provides an accurate assessment of strengths and weaknesses. However, the self-assessment report did not provide sufficient evidence to support the judgements.

