

INSPECTION REPORT

Flagship Training Limited

02 June 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

Flagship Training Limited

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DESCRIPTION OF THE PROVIDER

1. Flagship Training Limited (Flagship) was formed in 1996 from a consortium of high-technology companies related to the defence industry. In that year, it entered into a 15-year partnership with the Ministry of Defence (MoD) and the Naval Training Command (NTC), which enables Flagship to use the training resources of the Royal Navy. The company has two shareholders, VT and BAE Systems. It has two training centres in Fareham and Gosport and headquarters in Portsmouth.

2. Flagship has increased its learners considerably over the past year, and provides training for 249 learners in engineering and manufacturing technologies. A large proportion of these learners, who work for a national rail employer, started their programme in September 2005. Additionally, Flagship delivers the training, key skills qualifications and assessment for 17 apprentices and technical certificate training for 28 advanced apprentices, subcontracted to them from VT Training. VT Training also subcontracts its management information services to Flagship for processing paperwork for the Learning and Skills Council (LSC). The Defence Storage Distribution Agency subcontracts its off-the-job training to Flagship for the first 15 months of the learners' programmes. Assessment, internal verification and reviews for current learners in the workplace is by Flagship and a small element subcontracted to Fournir Associates.

3. The company has a training and education executive based at its headquarters, who has responsibility for strategic direction and planning. A head of technical training has responsibility for the operational management of the government-funded training and is supported by six managers. There are 53 staff and one temporary residential officer with direct responsibility for training, assessing and supporting learners.

4. Flagship has a contract with Hampshire and the Isle of Wight LSC. Learners are recruited from across the United Kingdom, from areas with high and low unemployment rates and minority ethnic groups representation. According to research published by the Sector Skills Council in 2002, 20 per cent of the engineering manufacturing workforce are women, but a high proportion of women work in the electronics and electrical equipment sectors. A low proportion of the engineering manufacturing workforce is from a minority ethnic group, at 29 per cent.

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS

Grade 2

5. **The overall effectiveness of the provision is good.** All aspects of leadership and management, including Flagship's approach to equality of opportunity and quality improvement, are good. The quality of training in engineering and manufacturing technologies is also good.

6. **The inspection team was broadly confident in the reliability of the self-assessment process.** Self-assessment is a well-established and effective process at Flagship. The process is critical and identifies appropriate strengths and weaknesses, which match those

FLAGSHIP TRAINING LIMITED

found by inspectors. Data is used sufficiently to make accurate judgements about learners' attendance and retention rates. Although feedback from learners, staff and employers has been used to support judgements in self-assessment, managers recognise the need to involve their partners and stakeholders more closely in self-assessment.

7. The provider has demonstrated that it is in a good position to make improvements.

Flagship has improved qualification success rates and the quality of its provision despite a significant increase in learner numbers. Partners' and learners' feedback is used well to improve learning programmes. Flagship has invested significantly in resources to meet the increasing needs of the business. Managers use external feedback and development plans effectively to make improvements. Several of the weaknesses identified in the inspection of July 2003 have been rectified. The completion of frameworks, promotion of equality of opportunity and strategic planning are now strengths, having previously been weaknesses.

KEY CHALLENGES FOR FLAGSHIP TRAINING LIMITED:

- develop and formalise its own quality assurance arrangements
- integrate and standardise the business areas across Flagship
- manage the growth in staffing levels
- increase the capacity to meet the business needs

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		2
Quality improvement		2

Engineering and manufacturing technologies			2
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade	
Engineering			
Apprenticeships for young people	249	2	

ABOUT THE INSPECTION

8. Inspectors visited Flagship for one day in April and four days at the end of May 2006. Flagship offers one area of learning, engineering, which was inspected during both visits. Flagship's previous inspection by the ALI was in July 2003.

Number of inspectors	3
Number of inspection days	13
Number of learners interviewed	23
Number of staff interviewed	21
Number of employers interviewed	2
Number of subcontractors interviewed	2
Number of locations/sites/learning centres visited	5
Number of partners/external agencies interviewed	1
Number of visits	1

KEY FINDINGS

Achievements and standards

9. **Flagship's qualification success rates are good and improving.** They have increased significantly since the previous inspection and are now above the national rates for advanced apprenticeship frameworks and national vocational qualifications (NVQs). A high proportion of the large number of learners who started their training programme in the current year are still in learning.

10. Learners are making satisfactory progress in the off-the-job training sessions. In the workplace, learners' portfolio work is of a good quality. Learners develop good practical skills during the off-the-job training and in the workplace.

The quality of provision

Grades given to learning sessions

	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Total
Engineering and manufacturing technologies	0	1	6	0	7
Total	0	1	6	0	7

11. **Learners receive a wide range of very effective personal support.** A dedicated team of residential officers and medical staff at HMS Collingwood are available for additional support where needed. Many of the employers have representatives on the off-the-job training sites, to assist with company-specific issues and provide immediate assistance. In the workplace, employers and supervisors provide good support to help learners in their on-the-job learning.

12. Flagship ensures a good level of flexibility is used when planning programmes of learning. The individual and unique needs of each employer and the future development needs of learners are met very effectively through negotiation of the learning programmes. In the workplace, assessors, employers and learners work very well together when planning assessment.

13. Learners have a wide range of enrichment activities in addition to their main programme. While learners are resident at HMS Collingwood, they participate in a good selection of sporting, life skills, and computing activities and competitions. Many learners work well beyond the framework requirements and achieve further qualifications, including foundation degrees. Many of the learning programmes additionally have leadership activities to prepare learners for their future careers.

14. Flagship has well-planned and comprehensive internal verification arrangements. Assessors and learners receive good-quality support that aids development. Learners are very knowledgeable about the internal verification process, and the role of internal verification is introduced to learners very early in their programme. The quality of assessment practice is satisfactory. Internal verifiers' feedback is used well to improve aspects of assessment practice. Learners also receive a very appropriate pastoral review with internal verifiers, where many aspects of their experience are discussed.

15. The quality of off-the-job teaching and learning is satisfactory. Learning is effective and learners' levels of skill and understanding are developing. Some of the revision learning sessions observed were too theoretical, with insufficient involvement of learners. Flagship has appropriate learning materials and resources to meet the needs of the current learners.

16. Learners receive appropriate initial advice and guidance from employers and Flagship before starting their programme. Induction is comprehensive and prepares learners well for all aspects of their learning and for being a resident at HMS Collingwood.

17. Learners at HMS Sultan receive regular feedback following each assessment, **but there are no formal arrangements for learners' overall progress to be reviewed.** Employers are not involved in the discussion of learners' progress held with their instructors. Learners at HMS Sultan who are in the workplace do not have any progress reviews. Learners have insufficient opportunities for individual targets or actions to be discussed or reviewed, as most targets are for the whole group. Arrangements for progress reviews at HMS Collingwood are satisfactory.

18. Flagship makes poor use of initial assessment, which has only recently been introduced. Learners are initially assessed at too low a level for the advanced apprenticeship. The results of initial assessment are not used effectively to provide structured literacy or numeracy support, but are referred to once the learner is having difficulties achieving aspects of their programme.

Leadership and management

19. **Flagship has very good partnership arrangements.** The partnering agreement with the Royal Navy continues to be strong, with many learners benefiting from using the unique resources. Flagship has a very effective partnership with a local university to offer the foundation degree to apprentices. Employers are fully involved in agreeing and designing programmes of learning.

20. **Strong leadership and strategic direction has led Flagship through a period of rapid and considerable growth.** The business planning process has a clear focus on developing the future of the organisation and providing good-quality training. Flagship's organisation structure has developed well to meet the increasing needs of the business and bring training on both sites under one cohesive management structure.

21. **Flagship's appraisal process is very thorough and effective.** Good use is made of a competency system to monitor performance and set objectives. Flagship has a well-planned strategy for learning and development. It has made a considerable investment in training and development to support the increase in learner numbers.

22. **Internal and external communications are very effective.** Communication with employers is particularly good through regular monthly meetings. Learners' success is celebrated well through external publicity. A wide range of media is used to communicate with staff. Flagship has effective routes for staff to give feedback to leaders and managers.

23. **Flagship promotes and monitors equality of opportunity very effectively,** supported well by some very good work by the organisation's equal opportunities champion. Staff training and development on equality of opportunity is very good, and is extended to subcontractors. Equality of opportunity is reinforced well with learners, from induction through to informal group meetings and reviews.

24. Flagship has very effective quality improvement arrangements. It has made significant improvements since the previous inspection. In particular, achievement rates are improving and are now very good. All staff are taking teacher training qualifications and the dedicated training academy has opened at HMS Sultan. Flagship's development planning is very effective in driving continuous improvement.

25. **Learners' and employers' feedback is collected regularly and used well to make improvements to programmes and modules.** Complaints are managed well. Staff are very approachable and take a measured approach when dealing with complaints. Employers are fully informed about any issues and complaints.

26. **Managers make insufficient use of the wide range of data available to them.** Data is not always presented in a way that is useful for managers. Although data on learners' progress has become more widely used, there is little comparison of progress against target dates set for learners. Managers do not routinely make use of performance data by different groups or tutors to identify trends.

27. **Flagship's internal monitoring and observation systems are insufficient for the current number of staff and learners involved in the programme.** Although external observations of teaching take place, managers carry out insufficient analysis of the results

and do not monitor whether action or improvements happen. Flagship's arrangements for the monitoring of activities in the workplace, including those provided by a subcontractor, are insufficient.

Leadership and management

Strengths

- very strong partnership arrangements
- strong leadership and strategic direction
- good staff appraisal and development
- very effective internal and external communication
- very effective promotion and monitoring of equality of opportunity
- very good management of learners' feedback and complaints

Weaknesses

- insufficient use of data by managers
- insufficient use of internal monitoring and observation systems

Engineering and manufacturing technologies

Engineering

Strengths

- good and improving qualification success rates
- very good support for learners
- extremely flexible programmes
- wide range of enrichment activities
- good internal verification process

Weaknesses

- weak progress reviews at HMS Sultan
- poor use of initial assessment

WHAT LEARNERS LIKE ABOUT FLAGSHIP TRAINING LIMITED:

- the workshops and practical work
- the sports facilities
- the leadership exercises
- the mentors in the workplace
- the information technology (IT) facilities
- making friends and meeting new people
- the training facilities
- the wide range of topics and subjects covered

WHAT LEARNERS THINK FLAGSHIP TRAINING LIMITED COULD IMPROVE:

- some uninspiring teaching - 'all talk'
- the portfolio work
- the relevance of the lesson content at HMS Collingwood
- the distance from home to the training centre

DETAILED INSPECTION FINDINGS

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Grade 2

Strengths

- very strong partnership arrangements
- strong leadership and strategic direction
- good staff appraisal and development
- very effective internal and external communication
- very effective promotion and monitoring of equality of opportunity
- very good management of learners' feedback and complaints

Weaknesses

- insufficient use of data by managers
- insufficient use of internal monitoring and observation systems

28. The partnering arrangements with the Royal Navy have been further strengthened and many learners benefit from using the unique, good-quality resources available through NTC. Flagship has a very effective partnership with a local university to offer the foundation degree where this meets employers' and learners' development needs. Employers are fully involved in agreeing and designing programmes of learning. Flagship, NTC and employers arrange joint or partnered delivery of some aspects of the programme, including induction, to ensure learners have the most appropriate input. Some employers are based on Flagship's sites, ensuring a readily accessible point of contact for learners and instructors. Flagship and one of its subcontracted organisations are planning complementary programmes for the future, which use the strengths of each organisation.

29. The training and education executive has led Flagship well through a period of rapid growth. A strong business planning process, supported by an external consultant's market analysis, identifies external business for future development. Government-funded learning is a key area of the main Flagship business plan. Staff have a good awareness of the business plan, which is communicated very well through an employee business plan with the headline successes and key targets. Flagship's mission statement has a clear focus on the future of the organisation and delivering good-quality training. The organisation's structure has been developed well to meet the increasing needs of the business. The training on both sites is now under one management structure, ensuring a cohesive management strategy across the whole provision.

30. Flagship's appraisal process is very thorough and effective. Staff and managers use a competency-based system well to grade performance. Staff and managers agree appropriate objectives which are monitored after six months and at the subsequent annual appraisal. The appraisal process has two stages of moderation, and the head office monitors the spread of grades across the company for reliability and trends. Appraisal leads to staff development. Flagship has a well-planned strategy for learning and development with a clear focus on developing trained and qualified trainers and assessors for the future. Staff development is a strong feature of the business plan. The company

makes a considerable investment in training and development to support the increase in business. Staff have good opportunities for development, promotion and secondments, including those within the two shareholder organisations, which are well publicised and used.

31. Communication with employers is particularly good through regular monthly meetings with Flagship. Employers are well informed about progress and have sufficient opportunity to discuss issues with learners and programmes. Contracts are in place with employers, and the most recent versions of contracts include clear responsibilities for each party. Learners' success is celebrated well through external publicity. Within Flagship, a wide range of media is used to communicate with staff. Staff have good awareness of company initiatives through newsletters, weekly team briefings and team meetings. They have effective routes to give feedback about new policies and procedures to leaders and managers. Monthly executive meetings maintain a regular communication between Flagship and the board. Flagship's dedicated sales team have good links with managers and instructors for the training programmes.

32. Resources are generally managed well. Software has been introduced to support the planning of learning and resources at HMS Sultan. A manager co-ordinates instructors and classrooms with NTC to ensure programmes run smoothly. Learners now have a dedicated training centre through the opening of the training academy in September 2005. Flagship has plans to further improve the training academy, by developing more flexible learning areas and introducing more computers and recreation areas. The programme managers do not have sufficient time allocated for them to manage some aspects of their role, including performance management, attending managers' meetings and observing instructors.

33. Flagship initially assesses learners for literacy and numeracy support needs. Instructors with expertise in mathematics and dyslexia provide support where needed. The trigger for additional learning support tends to result from learners' performance in assignment work or tests rather than as a result of initial assessment.

34. Flagship's self-assessment has identified a weakness in its use of the analysis of learners' data. Over the past six months, Flagship has used data more effectively in monitoring learners' progress, but it makes little comparison of progress against target dates set for learners. Management information about the government-funded learners is processed by a subcontractor, who can produce an extensive range of reports and information. This system is under-used, and Flagship currently only receive a small number of the possible range of reports. Data is not presented in a way that is useful for managers. Managers do not routinely make use of performance data by different groups or tutors to identify issues or successes.

Equality of opportunity

Contributory grade 2

35. Flagship is very effective in promoting and monitoring equality of opportunity with staff and learners. Learners receive extensive equality awareness training during their induction onto the programme from staff at NTC and Flagship. Equality of opportunity issues are reinforced well through a series of classroom discussions. An appropriate variety of individual and group exercises is used to explore equality of opportunity. Where learners are receiving progress reviews, the actual process and depth of discussion does not sufficiently challenge the learners' understanding of equality matters. Staff at Flagship and the subcontractors routinely receive equality and diversity training. All Flagship staff have

attended 'care of the trainee' courses organised by the MoD and have a good understanding of their responsibilities for monitoring and promoting equality matters. Flagship's equality champion effectively monitors legislation, co-ordinates complaints and grievances, and plans equality and diversity training for staff.

36. Learners' feedback and complaints are managed very well. Learners' views are frequently collected regarding their experiences on programme and on the levels of support given to them. This information is used very effectively to tackle any occurrences or feelings of mistreatment they may have. For learners who are resident at HMS Collingwood, this is an invaluable feature of their first year on their programme, which is often their first time of living away from home. Flagship's staff have created an atmosphere of trust among the learners. Staff take a very measured approach to any complaint received. Individuals or groups are interviewed to identify any root cause. Employers are contacted and fully involved in the complaint handling process. Ongoing monitoring takes place and any corrective action taken is frequently reviewed for effect.

37. Teaching accommodation at the training academy is on one floor and allows good access for learners with restricted mobility and wheelchair users. There is satisfactory access available for these learners at HMS Collingwood and within the residential accommodation areas.

38. Flagship has a comprehensive series of policies and procedures that fully meet equality legislation. Codes of conduct and policies express the company's commitment to combating all forms of discrimination. Copies of policies are prominently displayed throughout buildings, classrooms and training facilities. These are detailed further within the employers' and learners' handbooks. Marketing and recruitment materials promote well the values of the company. Flagship's staff have little involvement in the recruitment of learners. The company has insufficient arrangements or agreements with employers to monitor, promote or assist them in recruiting learners from minority ethnic or disadvantaged groups. Currently, 4 per cent of learners are women, 2 per cent are from minority ethnic groups and 2 per cent have declared a disability. Flagship has extensive data about learners, which is collected and available, but not sufficiently analysed to monitor trends, including in performance by different groups. This data is not used effectively to monitor and increase recruitment by different groups.

Quality improvement

Contributory grade 2

39. Flagship has very effective arrangements for bringing about improvement. Leaders and managers place a strong emphasis on improving the quality of the provision. Clear strategies have been developed for improving training. Qualification success rates and NVQ achievement rates have improved over the past two years and are above national rates. This area is now a strength having been a weakness at the previous inspection. Close and regular working with partners ensures issues are discussed and resolved at an early stage. The timely progression rate has improved for the second intake of learners from one of the organisations that subcontracts learners to Flagship. Flagship has recognised the need to develop the skills of its instructors and has invested significantly in teachers' and assessors' training courses.

40. Learners' feedback is regularly collected and is analysed at the end of each learning module. For many learners, this is followed up thoroughly by discussions with one of the programme managers. Learners' and partners' feedback is used very effectively, and

improvement and appropriate remedial actions are taken. This has included reviewing and changing the duration, content and tutors for learning modules. Stakeholders' evaluation and feedback is a key part of Flagship's approach to quality improvement. Resources have been improved and developed, with employers' involvement, ensuring these are relevant to the learners' working environment. Staff are actively encouraged to develop systems and paperwork and revise these to meet the needs of the learners and their departments.

41. Internal verification arrangements are good and managed very effectively across the organisation by Flagship's centre co-ordinator. A very thorough internal verification strategy has been written. Internal verifiers thoroughly evaluate the support arrangements for learners, and effect improvements to the quality of pastoral care. Assessors are more confident in identifying suitable assessment opportunities, and are planning on- and off-the-job training to ensure they maximise these opportunities.

42. Self-assessment is well established and the current version of the self-assessment report has built on previous reports. The process is sufficiently critical and has identified appropriate strengths and weaknesses. Staff, learners' and partners' feedback has been used to some extent, but managers recognise the need for more involvement. Self-assessment and the development plan are effective in bringing about improvement. Good progress is made towards achieving actions on the recent development plan, particularly for instructors starting teacher training qualifications and the introduction of learners' progression charts.

43. Flagship's quality arrangements are linked to ISO 9001, an international quality assurance standard. They are meeting the business requirements, in particular for administration, planning, operational and strategic management. Internal audits of paperwork are carried out by one of the subcontractors, but focus on LSC contract compliance rather than the quality of the processes.

44. Flagship's internal monitoring and observation systems are insufficient for the current number of staff and learners involved in the programme. Too much reliance is placed on the quality assurance and monitoring carried out by external organisations. Some observation of teaching and learning is carried out by external organisations to support new staff going through teaching qualifications, and some staff have been observed by their previous employers. Managers carry out insufficient analysis of the results of external observations of teaching and learning and are not yet monitoring if actions are taken following feedback. All instructors have been risk assessed, based on their experience of teaching and when they received their most recent external observation. A few instructors have been observed by one of Flagship's managers. Flagship's arrangements for monitoring activities for the small number of learners in the workplace, including the work of the subcontractor, are insufficient.

AREAS OF LEARNING

Engineering and manufacturing technologies

Grade 2

Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Engineering		2
Apprenticeships for young people	249	2

45. Flagship has 249 advanced apprentices, of whom 204 receive their learning at HMS Sultan and 45 at HMS Collingwood. All learners complete an NVQ in performing engineering operations at level 2. Learners then take one or more level 3 qualifications to match their job role, including railway engineering, engineering maintenance, mechanical manufacturing and telecommunications, engineering and mechanical engineering and a variety of externally accredited diplomas. Learners can also progress onto a foundation degree at level 4 with Portsmouth University. Flagship has seen a considerable growth in the number of learners starting in the past year, with approximately 75 per cent of the learners, who all work for a national rail employer, starting their programme in September 2005. To meet this increase, Flagship opened a dedicated training academy at HMS Sultan. Additionally, Flagship delivers the training, key skills qualifications and assessment for 17 apprentices and technical certificate training for 28 advanced apprentices, subcontracted to them from VT Training.

46. Learners are supported in their training by a team of instructors, both civilian and from NTC. Most learners spend the whole of their first year in off-the-job training. On completion of the first year, many of these learners go into their workplace. A small number of learners alternate their training between blocks of off-the-job training and training in the workplace. A high proportion of the learners live on-site, in accommodation at HMS Collingwood.

Engineering

Strengths

- good and improving qualification success rates
- very good support for learners
- extremely flexible programmes
- wide range of enrichment activities
- good internal verification process

Weaknesses

- weak progress reviews at HMS Sultan
- poor use of initial assessment

Achievement and standards

47. Flagship's qualification success rates have increased significantly over the past two

years and, at 69 per cent in 2004-05, are well above the national rates. This is a considerable improvement in framework completion since the previous inspection of three years ago, when under 10 per cent of learners were completing their framework. The NVQ achievement rate has also improved and, at 85 per cent, is significantly above the national rate. For the high proportion of learners who started their programme this year, retention rates are good, and 94 per cent of learners with the main employer are still on programme. These learners are making satisfactory progress towards achieving their level 2 NVQ and 15 per cent of the learners who started have already achieved six weeks ahead of their planned completion date. Learners also make satisfactory progress towards achieving key skills qualifications and any academic qualification they are taking.

48. In the workplace, learners' portfolios are of a good quality and contain a diverse range of work-based evidence. Learners produce clearly indexed work that meets the nationally recognised standards well. They develop good practical skills during the off-the-job training and in the workplace. Instructors set realistic, practical exercises and assignments that extend learners' knowledge and understanding.

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	13	69	57	62	46
		timely	11	36	34	27	27
	2004-05	overall	13	85	57	69	45
		timely	13	38	33	23	25

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

49. Learners make good use of the wide range of very effective personal support that is available to them. The support for learners who are resident is particularly good. A dedicated team of residential officers is available for learners 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Residential officers are trained extensively to deal with challenging behaviour and are fully informed of the support services available to learners. Very good support arrangements are in place for learners who need medical or dental treatment. Learners under the age of 18 are closely mentored and follow a well-structured reporting and attendance procedure while in training. All learners have good access to the chaplains and social services at HMS Collingwood. There are frequent pastoral reviews with instructors. Employers are able to give immediate support, as many have representatives who are permanently located at the training centre. In the workplace, employers and supervisors provide good support to help learners in their on-the-job learning. Learners can use free travel warrants to make visits home. Flagship has ensured that it gives good support to learners with specific needs, including those with dyslexia and insulin users. Additional tutorial support is available for learners who are finding their coursework or exams difficult.

50. Flagship ensures a good level of flexibility is used when planning programmes of learning. The individual and unique needs of each employer and the future development needs of the learner in that context are met very effectively through negotiation of the

learning programmes. Flagship's staff co-ordinate these programmes well and make best use of the available resources, including instructors and practical facilities. In the workplace, assessors, employers and learners work very well together when planning assessment. Learners are experiencing a broad range of workplace activities as part of their training and are encouraged to identify areas of work that most interest them.

51. Learners have a wide range of enrichment activities in addition to their main programme. Whilst learners are resident at HMS Collingwood, they participate in a good selection of sporting, life skills and computing activities and competitions. Some learners complete team-building courses at HMS Raleigh and others are participating in the Royal Navy's field gun competition this year. Many learners work well beyond the framework requirements and achieve further qualifications, including foundation degrees and computer qualifications. Many of the learning programmes additionally have leadership activities to prepare learners for their future careers.

52. Flagship has well-planned and comprehensive internal verification arrangements. Assessors and learners receive good-quality support and feedback that aids their development. Each assessor has a regularly updated and reviewed training needs analysis and action plan. Best practice is identified and used following the regular standardisation meetings. Learners are very knowledgeable about the internal verification process, and the role is introduced to learners early in their programme. Learners also receive a very appropriate pastoral review with internal verifiers, where many aspects of their experience are discussed.

53. The quality of assessment practice is satisfactory, and aspects of assessment have improved following feedback from internal verifiers. Subcontracted assessors visit learners every two weeks, to plan and carry out assessment in the workplace. Some work-based assessors are currently being trained to further support assessment in the workplace.

54. The standard of teaching and learning is satisfactory and promotes effective learning. Learning sessions are satisfactorily planned with lesson plans and supporting notes. Some of the revision teaching seen during inspection, was often uninspiring and too theoretical. Instructors use effective questioning techniques. In practical sessions, learners develop skills well in areas such as designing and constructing a circuit board.

55. Induction is satisfactory and comprehensive, providing learners with useful information for their course. Health and safety, and equality of opportunity are covered adequately.

56. Learners receive appropriate advice and guidance about all aspects of their training programme before they start. They are fully informed about the qualifications that are available and how these will be covered over the programme. The initial information doesn't give learners sufficient information about the proportion of academic work that will be included in their programme.

57. Training resources are satisfactory and learners can use the extensive practical work areas of the Royal Navy. Learners have good use of up-to-date laptop computers for assignment work and portfolio-building. Flagship's staff place a high importance on health and safety, which is thoroughly monitored. Learners make good use of self-study facilities, including the learning resource centre.

58. Flagship makes poor use of initial assessment. A level 1 initial assessment has been introduced this year, which is too low for learners on advanced apprenticeships who are taking key skills qualifications at level 2. Where learners are identified as being at entry level 2 or 3, no structured literacy or numeracy support is built into their training programme. The results of initial assessment are used reactively, once learners are struggling with the more academic parts of their learning. Flagship has not carried out initial assessment on learners who started before September 2005 or who are learning at HMS Collingwood.

59. Learners at HMS Sultan receive regular reviews of their progress at the end of each module, but do not have a progress review that includes the employer, Flagship and the learner. There are no opportunities for learners' overall progress towards achieving their targets on their individual learning plan to be reviewed. Learners do not have individual or long-term targets to guide them through the next stages of their programme. Where there are discussions about learners' progress, these do not sufficiently challenge the learner. None of the HMS Sultan learners in the workplace are receiving progress reviews.

Leadership and management

60. Flagship's operational management is effective. Staff are monitored through the annual appraisal system, where targets and objectives are set. These objectives are sufficiently challenging and measurable and relate well to the individual's job role or responsibilities. Flagship has implemented a well-planned staff development programme to train staff in assessing and teaching. Staff are encouraged and funded to participate in a wide range of personal development activities. Although Flagship has plans for the small number of long-standing tutors to update their technical training, this has not yet happened. Management information systems used at each of the training centres are easily accessible and have a broad range of information available. Little analysis of data takes place. Managers hold regular team meetings to discuss in detail any programme issues or concerns that may have arisen. There is insufficient recruitment from under-represented groups. Flagship's strategy for marketing provision to more diverse groups, for example to encourage more women into engineering, has yet to show any significant effect. Learners have a good awareness of equality of opportunity, which is reinforced throughout their programme. Too little internal observation of training takes place. Learners' feedback is used well to make improvements to programmes. Self-assessment for engineering is thorough and identifies appropriate strengths and weaknesses.

