

# REINSPECTION REPORT

## **Asset Training and Consultancy Limited Reinspection**

**23 August 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
- **learndirect** provision
- Adult and Community Learning
- training funded by Jobcentre Plus
- education and training in prisons, at the invitation of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Prisons
- adult information, advice and guidance services (**nextstep**).

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

## 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*

# REINSPECTION REPORT

## Asset Training and Consultancy Limited Reinspection

### Contents

#### Summary

Description of the provider	1
Grades	1
About the reinspection	3
Engineering, technology & manufacturing	4

## REINSPECTION REPORT

### DESCRIPTION OF THE PROVIDER

1. Asset Training and Consultancy Limited (AT) is a private training provider based in Bootle, Merseyside. It also has a training centre in Southport to deliver part of its contracted provision. AT currently provides training opportunities for young, employed or unemployed people in several areas of learning. The Greater Merseyside Learning and Skills Council provides funding for apprenticeship programmes and Skillsworks. The higher workforce skills programme is provided using European Social Funds (ESF). AT works closely with a number of local colleges and other training providers in delivering its programmes, and subcontracts a large part of its performing manufacturing operations provision to Horseshoe Training. The provider employs 16 full-time staff, and works with several other specialist individuals to deliver and manage the programmes. For 2005-06, AT's publicly funded work constituted 80 per cent of its business.

### GRADES

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

Grades awarded at previous inspection

<b>Leadership and management</b>		<b>3</b>
Contributory grades:		
Equality of opportunity		3
Quality improvement		3

<b>Engineering, technology &amp; manufacturing</b>			<b>4</b>
<b>Contributory areas:</b>	<b>Number of learners</b>	<b>Contributory grade</b>	
<b>Manufacturing</b>			
Apprenticeships for young people	32	4	
Other government-funded provision	13	2	

<b>Business administration, management &amp; professional</b>			<b>3</b>
<b>Contributory areas:</b>	<b>Number of learners</b>	<b>Contributory grade</b>	
<b>Business administration</b>			
Apprenticeships for young people	31	3	
Other government-funded provision	3	3	
<b>Management</b>			
NVQ training for young people	8	3	
<b>Other contributory areas</b>			
Apprenticeships for young people	14	3	

ASSET TRAINING AND CONSULTANCY LIMITED REINSPECTION

<b>Retailing, customer service &amp; transportation</b>		
		<b>3</b>
<b>Contributory areas:</b>	<b>Number of learners</b>	<b>Contributory grade</b>
<b>Retailing</b>		
Apprenticeships for young people	1	3
<b>Customer service</b>		
Apprenticeships for young people	47	3
Other government-funded provision	33	2
<b>Warehousing and distribution</b>		
Apprenticeships for young people	3	3
Other government-funded provision	2	2
<b>Lift-truck awards</b>		
Other government-funded provision	2	2
NVQ training for young people	13	3

<b>Hospitality, sport, leisure &amp; travel</b>		
		<b>4</b>
<b>Contributory areas:</b>	<b>Number of learners</b>	<b>Contributory grade</b>
<b>Hospitality and catering</b>		
Apprenticeships for young people	16	4
Other government-funded provision	18	4

<b>Hairdressing &amp; beauty therapy</b>		
		<b>3</b>
<b>Contributory areas:</b>	<b>Number of learners</b>	<b>Contributory grade</b>
<b>Hairdressing</b>		
Apprenticeships for young people	23	3
Other government-funded provision	2	3

<b>Health, social care &amp; public services</b>		
		<b>3</b>
<b>Contributory areas:</b>	<b>Number of learners</b>	<b>Contributory grade</b>
<b>Care</b>		
Apprenticeships for young people	27	3
Other government-funded provision	80	3
NVQ training for young people	1	3
<b>Public services</b>		
Apprenticeships for young people	2	3

Grades awarded at reinspection

<b>Engineering, technology &amp; manufacturing</b>		
		<b>2</b>
<b>Contributory areas:</b>	<b>Number of learners</b>	<b>Contributory grade</b>
<b>Manufacturing</b>		
Apprenticeships for young people	4	2
Other government-funded provision	28	2

## ABOUT THE REINSPECTION

2. At the previous inspection, the provider was judged to be satisfactory in all aspects of its provision, with the exception of two areas of learning . These areas were engineering, technology and manufacturing, and hospitality, sport, leisure and travel. Since the previous inspection, the provider has discontinued its provision for hospitality, sport, leisure and travel. At the reinspection, engineering, technology and manufacturing was judged to be good. The overall effectiveness of AT's provision remains satisfactory.

Number of inspectors	2
Number of inspection days	6
Number of learners interviewed	6
Number of staff interviewed	16
Number of employers interviewed	3
Number of subcontractors interviewed	6
Number of locations/sites/learning centres visited	3
Number of visits	3

## AREAS OF LEARNING

### Engineering, technology & manufacturing

Grade 2

Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
<b>Manufacturing</b>		
Apprenticeships for young people	4	2
Other government-funded provision	28	2

3. AT currently has 32 learners in engineering, technology and manufacturing. Of these learners, 28 are working on an ESF-supported higher workforce skills programme in performing manufacturing operations. The remaining four learners are on an apprenticeship training programme. One learner is taking an apprenticeship in installing information technology, and three learners, who are subcontracted to Horseshoe Training, are taking an apprenticeship in performing manufacturing operations. All learners are employed. They work with employers which are involved in the manufacture of a diverse range of products associated with the medical, food production, and military sectors. All training is delivered in the workplace.

#### **Manufacturing**

##### *Strengths*

- good retention and achievement
- particularly good support for learners
- good management of programmes

##### *Weaknesses*

- no significant weaknesses were identified

#### **Achievement and standards**

4. Retention and achievement are good. The completion of apprenticeship frameworks has improved significantly from 32 per cent in 2003-04 to 85 per cent in 2004-05. For the period 2005-06, 43 per cent of learners have already completed their frameworks and a further 57 per cent are still in training. Ninety-two per cent of learners on the higher workforce skills programme in 2003-04 were successful, but this figure dropped to 58 per cent for 2004-05. A problem of access to learners with one particular employer has been resolved, which accounted for 30 per cent of average in learning for the year 2004-05. Many learners are in the process of completing their training programmes and others are making good progress towards achieving national vocational qualification (NVQ) units. The overall success rate for 2005-06 is 17 per cent, and 80 per cent of learners are still in training.

5. Learners are placed on learning programmes that match their needs, skills and abilities closely. They develop practical skills quickly on a wide range of industrial equipment, and demonstrate confidence in using tools and equipment. Learners work systematically

when carrying out required manufacturing operations.

### **The quality of provision**

6. Staff and employers provide particularly good support to learners. AT's staff and its learners have good working relationships. They feel well supported and know whom to contact if they require any help or assistance. Training consultants visit the workplace to monitor and review learners' progress. The timing of these visits is made flexible, in order to accommodate learners' work patterns and employers' operational needs. Where necessary, learners who have experienced difficulties with the programme receive prompt individual support from their allocated training consultant. Learners appreciate and value this frequent contact with their training consultant, and find it very motivating.

7. AT's staff work hard to involve committed and supportive employers. Employers are very supportive of training and give good assistance and encouragement to learners. Some learners are able to work in various departments to extend their skills and knowledge. The support for learners with additional literacy, numeracy or language needs has been improved. Effective support is provided in the workplace by AT's staff and, where appropriate, learners are referred for specialist support. Staff provide learners with particularly useful information, advice and guidance about skills, qualifications and training. They also provide valuable information to employers about learning programmes and developing people at work.

8. All training received by learners is delivered in the workplace by training consultants who have up-to-date industrial knowledge and appropriate vocational awards. Work-placement visits focus on the technical aspects of the learners' programmes, such as observation by direct assessment, and ensuring that assessment plans and records are kept up to date. A learning aim plan and an individual learning plan are used effectively to monitor learners' progress and training needs. Most learners and employers have a satisfactory understanding of the monitoring documents, and the progress that learners are making with the NVQ. They are able to contribute effectively to the training and assessment process.

9. Learners' progress reviews are now satisfactory. Employers are involved more consistently in the reviews. Any proposed revisions to a learner's training programme are discussed with the learner and the employer, and revised targets are agreed. However, sometimes previously agreed targets are not checked during progress reviews. Some targets set during progress reviews are not always sufficiently focused, or time bound. A number of reviews make little reference to whether previously agreed targets have been achieved or not.

10. The delivery of key skills training is effective. Key skills training is delivered at an early stage in the programme, and online testing has been introduced. For most of the learners, key skills training is well established and work related. However, a small number of learners cannot understand the relevance of key skills to the workplace.

### **Leadership and management**

11. A number of initiatives have been introduced to bring about improvements in all areas of learning. In manufacturing, these initiatives have been implemented successfully. For example, the monitoring of learners' progress is good, and employers are involved in



the learning process more effectively. Staff are better equipped and trained to support the learners, and the management information system is used well to manage overall performance and identify trends. Feedback from learners, staff and employers, and observations of key learning processes, is evaluated thoroughly and actions are taken to improve the quality of provision. Arrangements to manage and monitor the performance of the subcontractor are effective. Comprehensive policies and procedures have been shared with the subcontractor. Communications are regular and meaningful, and productive meetings take place to monitor learners' progress, develop best practice, share resources, train staff, and promote a collaborative approach.

12. AT has comprehensive and thorough internal verification arrangements that include the well-planned sampling of assessment practice. Regular standardisation meetings are used effectively to share good practice and ensure consistency between assessors.

13. Arrangements for the promotion of equality of opportunity are good. Staff make good use of standard questions to check and reinforce learners' understanding of equality and diversity, during the induction process and at progress reviews. Learners are also asked to write about equality and diversity as part of the key skill in communication. Learners demonstrate a good understanding of equality of opportunity and have good knowledge of the complaints procedure and how to use it.

14. The self-assessment process is inclusive of all staff, and uses additional feedback from learners and employers to identify improvements. The self-assessment report identified some of the strengths found by the inspection team. The report and action plan are reviewed and updated regularly to monitor progress made with proposed actions.

