

INSPECTION REPORT

Michaeljohn Training

17 November 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*

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INSPECTION REPORT

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROVIDER

1. Michaeljohn Training (MJT) is a privately owned company providing apprenticeships and advanced apprenticeships in hairdressing. It was established in 1983 and offers government-funded work-based learning programmes on behalf of the Greater Manchester Learning and Skills Council (LSC). MJT provides recruitment and placement services for learners and has links with approximately 150 salons in Manchester and the surrounding areas. The MJT school is based in Manchester city centre and has 25 staff. There are 212 learners, of whom 130 are apprentices and 82 are advanced apprentices. Eighteen learners are men and 18 are from minority ethnic groups. Eighty-nine learners have additional learning needs. All learners below level 1 in their initial assessments receive additional learning support.

2. MJT currently provides national vocational qualifications (NVQs) at levels 2 and 3 for the hairdressing apprentices of 149 salons. Most learners attend the MJT school for their off-the-job training. A small number of learners, working for two employers, receive all their training in their salons. Attendance is flexible at the MJT school. Learners attend for one day each week or each fortnight for hairdressing practical and background knowledge sessions. Practical training also takes place in the salons in which learners work. Most assessment takes place in the MJT school for most learners. A small amount of work-based assessment is carried out by MJT's assessors and the 10 salon-based assessors. There are seven MJT trainer-assessors, four peer mentors or trainee trainers, one lead internal verifier, three other internal verifiers and one member of staff who is close to qualifying. MJT's staff are appropriately qualified. The course director manages the learner support arrangements and is the MJT health and safety officer. Learners are recruited through Connexions, local hairdressing employers, local schools and through direct contact with MJT.

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS

Grade 2

3. **The overall effectiveness of the provision is good.** MJT's leadership and management are good, as are its arrangements for equality of opportunity and quality improvement. The provision in retail and commercial enterprise is good.

4. **The inspection team was broadly confident in the reliability of the self-assessment process.** The rigour and accuracy of the process is appropriate. It is inclusive and uses the views of learners, employers, key users and staff on a continual basis. The self-assessment report accurately identifies most the strengths and weaknesses of the provision. The grade that MJT gives to its leadership and management is too generous, but all other grades in the self-assessment report are the same as those given by inspectors.

5. **The provider has demonstrated that it is in a good position to make improvements.** MJT has increased its learner numbers by more than 21 per cent since its previous inspection in 2004 and has maintained the good training and standards of work identified then. Success rates are good and improving on the advanced apprenticeship programme. Timely success rates on the apprenticeship programme have improved. Forty-two per cent

of MJT's learners have additional learning needs. These learners achieve almost as well as the other learners and MJT continues to improve the good range of additional support offered. The quality improvement grade given at this inspection is higher than the grade for quality assurance given at the 2004 inspection.

KEY CHALLENGES FOR MICHAELJOHN TRAINING:

- continue to improve learners' overall and timely success rates
- continue to improve the quality of teaching and learning
- maintain and evaluate the good promotion to engage under-represented groups
- continue to improve evaluation of all aspects of the provision
- continue to establish the promotion of continuous improvement
- further develop employers' involvement in planning and reviewing their learners' programmes and progress
- further develop the management information systems
- develop the systems used to monitor and support learners' progress

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

Retail and commercial enterprise			2
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade	
<i>Hairdressing</i>		2	
Apprenticeships for young people	212	2	

ABOUT THE INSPECTION

6. The inspection took place over four days in the same week in mid-November 2006. The three hairdressing inspectors observed hairdressing induction sessions, training, assessment, internal verification and learners' progress reviews. Thirteen learning sessions were graded, including those at the MJT school and learners' workplace salons. The hairdressing inspectors interviewed MJT's hairdressing staff, learners and salon employers and made 10 visits to learners' workplace salons. The inspection of equality of opportunity was led by a hairdressing inspector. The fourth inspector, a non-hairdresser, led on the leadership and management and quality improvement aspects of the inspection. The inspector interviewed MJT's senior managers, a wide range of MJT's staff and their external partners, either in person or by telephone.

Number of inspectors	4
Number of inspection days	16
Number of learners interviewed	67
Number of staff interviewed	20
Number of employers interviewed	11
Number of locations/sites/learning centres visited	1
Number of partners/external agencies interviewed	6
Number of visits	10

Leadership and management

Strengths

- good strategic planning and management
- particularly effective links and networking with external agencies and partners
- good support arrangements for learners
- good and effective communications, especially visual communications
- good staff development and training
- very good integration and promotion of equality and diversity
- good initiatives to attract under-represented groups
- good quality-improvement arrangements
- good use of feedback

Weaknesses

- inefficient management information systems to monitor trends in learners' progress
- some insufficient evaluation of equal opportunities initiatives

Retail and commercial enterprise

Hairdressing

Strengths

- good practical hairdressing skills
- good and improving success rates for advanced apprentices
- good teaching and learning activities
- good progression to advanced apprenticeships
- particularly good additional support

Weaknesses

- ineffective monitoring of learners' progress

WHAT LEARNERS LIKE ABOUT MICHAELJOHN TRAINING:

- the supportive, approachable staff
- 'we get help immediately, when we ask'
- 'going to MJT, it's fun'
- the practical hairdressing work
- 'doing all my training at my salon with MJT's help'
- 'they plan my training so I get the right assessments'
- 'I like the small discussion groups in the theory sessions'
- having interesting visiting speakers at MJT
- 'they make hairdressing theory very interesting'

WHAT LEARNERS THINK MICHAELJOHN TRAINING COULD IMPROVE:

- the number of practical NVQ assessments in learners' salons
- nothing
- the amount of modern small hairdressing tools at MJT

DETAILED INSPECTION FINDINGS

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Grade 2

Strengths

- good strategic planning and management
- particularly effective links and networking with external agencies and partners
- good support arrangements for learners
- good and effective communications, especially visual communications
- good staff development and training
- very good integration and promotion of equality and diversity
- good initiatives to attract under-represented groups
- good quality-improvement arrangements
- good use of feedback

Weaknesses

- inefficient management information systems to monitor trends in learners' progress
- some insufficient evaluation of equal opportunities initiatives

7. Good strategic planning and management have been maintained and further developed to benefit the learners at MJT. The provider has five detailed and well-considered key strategies covering the development of a wide range of learners' skills. These include skills for life and an effective retention strategy. Skills for life is the government's strategy on training in literacy, numeracy and the use of language. Various detailed plans and strategies are produced including a three-year development plan and annual business plan that cover the key elements of training. These plans conform to national and regional needs and include developments identified by staff, learners and employers. MJT effectively and regularly monitors and manages the plans using various performance indicators, including learners' progress, to ensure targets are being successfully met. Staff have good involvement in all plans and have a clear understanding of the strategic direction and business planning of MJT. All strategies and key targets are displayed for easy reference by staff. Senior managers provide good management.

8. MJT has maintained and developed its good links with many varied external agencies and networking contacts that benefit and develop learners. It networks extensively within the hairdressing industry, using guest speakers to inspire learners to develop their practical skills and take part in regional and national hairdressing competitions with good success. The local police force raises awareness of personal safety while working in a city centre. MJT's many links with external organisations help with its equal opportunities and diversity commitments, including widening participation and effectively establishing learners' understanding of equality of opportunity. Other strong links with external agencies provide some learners with good support for personal issues in areas including emergency housing, debt management, health matters and employment. Networking with local LSCs,

training consultants and other providers has helped MJT to develop teaching and learning and the use of information learning technology (ILT) and to develop and establish skills for life programmes and literacy and numeracy initiatives.

9. MJT manages support arrangements well to meet the needs of all learners. Those learners with additional learning needs are well supported, including those with dyslexia. The achievements of learners with additional learning needs are close to those of other learners. Appropriate arrangements are in place to ensure that support needs for learners are accurately identified. Staff are supportive and have a clear understanding of the social, behavioural and learning support needs of each learner. The monitoring of support for learners is effective and beneficial. Connexions has commended MJT for its support for learners and gave the organisation its quality initiative award in 2005.

10. MJT has maintained its good communications, especially in the area of visual communications which was a key feature at the previous inspection. MJT makes a very wide and effective use of photographs, lists, tables, posters and diagrams to convey clear messages and information for and about learners, including their successes in hairdressing competitions. A useful wall display shows responses to learners' suggestions. Staff areas have wall displays of information on the strategies and developments in MJT to promote ideas and discussion and to share information. Staff are kept well informed of MJT's objectives and feel involved in the provider's aims and targets. They are well aware of the policies and procedures and standards required, with wide use again being made of diagrams and tables to achieve this. Regular and effective meetings allow staff to discuss issues and share ideas. Staff understand their roles and responsibilities. Communications with external organisations are good and purposeful. The selection and recruitment of learners is comprehensive, fair and supportive in meeting their needs. MJT's managers monitor information to ensure targets for retention and achievement are met. Information is shared about learners' progress and action is taken where learners' progress towards their targets is inadequate.

11. Staff appraisal, training and development are good. Effective staff appraisal is carried out annually with a mid-year review to monitor carefully progress and performance. Individual training targets to meet staff members' specific roles and responsibilities are carefully reviewed and challenging new targets are devised or adjusted to suit progress and changing work circumstances. Staff training and development is comprehensive. It includes a very wide range of well-supported continuing professional development. This incorporates developments to meet national priorities, teaching qualifications and improving teaching and learning techniques, to provide effective skills for life development in sessions, equality and diversity awareness raising and literacy and numeracy support for learners.

12. MJT deploys and uses its resources effectively and efficiently to meet the needs of learners and its business. Staff are appropriately qualified for their job roles. The training school and workplace salons offer appropriate facilities, equipment and learning resources to meet learners' training needs. MJT provides effective value for money.

13. The standard and monitoring of health and safety practice and procedures in MJT is effective in meeting learners' and staff members' needs. MJT is supportive in helping learners' workplace salons to develop their health and safety practice and procedures and this is particularly valued by the employers.

14. The management information system has inefficiencies in monitoring learners' progress and providing useful information for managing at all staff levels. This is recognised in the self-assessment report. The system is not effective in monitoring the progress of learners' completion of NVQ units or those units which remain uncompleted. The system does not generate meaningful reports to collate the information to show the overall performance data. This makes it difficult to pre-empt problems of slow progress or uncompleted units, trends in assessment or achievement or to share best practice between assessors. Managers have insufficient readily available data to spot trends early. At present, managers react to situations and are not able to spot or avoid problems with learners' progress by forward planning using data analysis. MJT is piloting a new system to resolve this weaknesses.

Equality of opportunity

Contributory grade 2

15. MJT has good strategies to promote equality and diversity to learners and employers. Well-documented policies cover learners' and employers' responsibilities, rights and their expected commitment to the principles of equality and diversity. MJT has good awareness of the Disability and Discrimination Act 1995 and the need for Criminal Records Bureau checks for staff, and these are included in the strategies. Marketing materials and information sheets for prospective learners are available in different languages and have good visual images representing a range of diverse groups. All of MJT's documents contain statements identifying the provider's commitment to equality of opportunity, and religious holidays are honoured for staff. MJT has organised good staff development on new legislation and uses this development opportunity effectively to evaluate and modify all equal opportunities policies, information and guidance. MJT actively informs and raises employers' understanding of equality and diversity. Employers receive comprehensive and detailed information outlining all current equality legislation and related acts. Clear guidance identifies which aspects or acts are of particular importance to the small employer. Information for employers includes background statistical data, national trends and national strategies to promote equality of opportunity. Articles in MJT's newsletter, which is sent to salons every six months, inform and reinforce employers' contributions to equality and diversity. Access to the MJT school and facilities and to all but one salon is good for learners and clients with restricted mobility.

16. All learners are introduced to equality of opportunity through innovative teaching and role-play sessions during induction, supporting the good information in their induction pack. Equality is included well in vocational training opportunities such as client consultation, improving learners' own work practices and health and safety. Citizenship is an integral aspect of MJT's training. MJT also schedules additional and very relevant training sessions to raise learners' awareness of social and equality issues. Some of these sessions are planned as a result of learners' requests. External guest speakers provide sessions on personal and fire safety, lesbian and gay rights, drug and alcohol misuse and healthy lifestyles. MJT provides good and relevant information to all learners to support their economic and social wellbeing. Information on a large range of support agencies is freely available in the MJT school. Learners are given local support agency contact details and staff from agencies visit the centre to explain the support available. Although the wider issues of equality of opportunity are discussed fully during learners' progress reviews, the recording of these discussions is insufficiently detailed and in some instances is no more than confirmation that learners are happy and safe in their placements. MJT has recognised this weakness and recently introduced a new review record sheet with

accompanying equality and diversity questions.

17. Particularly well-planned activities and good collaborative relationships introduce MJT to a wide range of prospective learners from under-represented groups. MJT has good and effective partnerships with schools, including local special needs schools and grammar schools, with the city education department, with the local probation service and with the youth offending team. It uses these to provide information to prospective learners about the wide-ranging career opportunities in hairdressing. MJT provides hairdressing programmes that qualify year 11 pupils and learners referred by the probation service with two units towards the level 2 NVQ in hairdressing. MJT's willingness to engage learners who need social and economic support is communicated well and a good and effective working relationship has been established with Connexions. Specifically targeted demonstrations and careers events in community centres in parts of Manchester allocated as areas of high deprivation and neighbourhood renewal raise MJT's profile. MJT has a good staff representation that reflects the learners it is trying to attract. Of the 25 staff, 17 per cent are from minority ethnic groups and 33 per cent are men. Good use of staff and learners at career events breaks down the stereotypical perceptions of the hairdressing industry. The current proportion of learners coming from minority ethnic groups is 7 per cent at MJT, compared with an average for Manchester of 5 per cent. Forty-two per cent of MJT's learners have a disability or additional learning or social need. Nineteen per cent of learners are from areas of deprivation or neighbourhood renewal.

18. Learners receive good support and feel valued and respected at MJT. All learners met by inspectors feel that MJT listens to and acts on their views and comments. Learners' achievements are recognised and celebrated. Learners who show commitment and make good personal improvements receive special awards. These awards presentations are featured on displays in prominent areas around the centre, as are the photographs of learners' successes at local and national hairdressing competitions. All new learners receive good support as they prepare for interviews with employers. MJT's mentors provide good support for the many learners with social and personal needs. Learners with a record of unsuccessful interviews receive additional interview role-play and personal coaching to improve and build their confidence. MJT has good strategies to remove financial barriers that restrict learners from accessing employment and training. MJT supplies all small hairdressing equipment to learners and provides free bus passes for learners attending interviews to gain hairdressing employment. Learners are actively involved in charity work and each year have a nominated charity for fundraising.

19. MJT sets realistic targets as part of its strategic planning for equality of opportunity. It uses marketing meetings effectively to plan appropriate activities to support the achievement of strategic targets. Annual audits of employers and their premises provide MJT with a clear understanding of the accessibility and staff diversity of their provider salons. MJT uses this information well to match learners to appropriate salon employers. It supports employers willing to work towards vocational assessment qualifications, to increase workplace salon assessment opportunities for learners.

20. MJT effectively plans many initiatives to support its equal opportunities strategy. However, it carries out insufficient systematic evaluation of the effectiveness of some initiatives for each intake and at a strategic level. For example, to improve retention rates, MJT risk-assesses newly recruited learners to ascertain their personal, social or learning

needs. It uses this information to support learners through the initial stages of the programme. However, no data is available to establish how many learners are assessed to be at each level of risk or to evaluate the retention rates of each risk level.

Quality improvement

Contributory grade 2

21. MJT has good quality-improvement strategies and activities. Quality improvement is an essential element of the provision. It is a key part of all staff and managers' meetings and is linked to detailed action plans. MJT provides a comprehensive and easy-to-follow quality improvement manual for staff to use. Internal checks of compliance with procedures and learning are regularly and thoroughly carried out. Many steps are taken to monitor the standard of the learners' experience in training. These include observation of teaching and learning and its development, effective feedback arrangements and careful and detailed monitoring of learners' achievements and progress and the standard of resources to meet learning needs. Actions to rectify identified weaknesses are carried out in a timely fashion. Areas that have seen an improvement include teaching and learning and the development of the use of ILT, which learners appreciate. Learners use the internet to research topics for their learning. There have been good developments in the use of role-play to demonstrate topics in equality of opportunity. Healthy eating is promoted well to learners, and water is available to drink throughout the centre. New furniture has been supplied to the studio to enhance facilities. More specialist hairdressing tools have been provided to meet learners' needs.

22. MJT maintains its good and effective use of feedback to improve learning. It uses a wide range of mechanisms to gain feedback from learners, employers, staff and other key partners. Learners complete a series of questionnaires at key times during their programme. Questionnaires seek information on the key aspects of training and learners' support and areas for further development or improvement. Focus groups and session evaluations effectively allow learners to express their views and make suggestions for areas for improvement. Employers provide detailed feedback by telephone surveys. Key partners provide feedback through observation and reports. MJT carefully analyses the results from all feedback to identify trends or areas of major concern or for further development, such as improvements to teaching and resources. Results from feedback are shared at weekly staff meetings and areas for improvement are acted upon promptly. Feedback to learners is given in the MJT newsletter and is also displayed on noticeboards in the training school. Feedback to employers is given through the newsletter, which employers value. Changes made following feedback include the improved delivery of equality of opportunity sessions on harassment and bullying. When learners raised their lack of knowledge on health matters, MJT organised for the local university medical school to visit the training school to provide specialist information.

23. Internal verification arrangements are appropriate and are meeting the awarding body's standards and requirements. Internal verification planning takes place appropriately throughout the training programme and meets needs. There are suitable arrangements for sampling assessments, including the use of observation and careful examination of learners' portfolios and their work. Internal verification records are maintained and presented well. Verifiers provide useful verbal and written feedback to assessors to support their development and meet further training needs. Areas of concern are followed through to ensure improvement. There is adequate sharing of assessment best practice. External verifiers' reports are acted upon effectively and are mostly very positive about MJT's assessment and internal verification arrangements. Internal

verification is currently planned on a monthly basis. No long-term annual planning takes place.

24. The self-assessment process is sufficiently thorough and accurate. It is inclusive and uses the views of learners, employers, key users and staff on a continual basis. MJT makes effective use of data to make judgements about learners' achievement and progress, although judgements focus on older measures of success. The process is conducted regularly and identifies strengths and weaknesses which focus on the experience and achievement of learners. Inspectors identified most of the strengths and weaknesses identified by MJT. The development plan includes actions to resolve all key issues identified by self-assessment and is regularly monitored by managers to check for progress and improvement. MJT's self-assessment grade for leadership and management was too high but its grades for equality of opportunity and quality improvement matched those given by inspectors. The self-assessment grade for hairdressing matched the findings of inspection.

AREAS OF LEARNING

Retail and commercial enterprise

Grade 2

Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
<i>Hairdressing</i>		2
Apprenticeships for young people	212	2

25. At the time of the inspection there were 212 learners, of whom 130 were apprentices and 82 advanced apprentices. Eighteen learners were men and 18 learners were from minority ethnic groups. Eighty-nine learners had additional learning needs, 42 per cent of the total number of learners. All learners below level 1 in initial assessment receive additional learning support. MJT provides training for 123 salons. Ten of the salons have active work-based assessors. Most learners attend the centrally located MJT training school for their off-the-job training, which is close to major transport routes in Manchester. A small number of learners receive their off-the-job training in two salons. Learners attend for one day each week or fortnight for hairdressing practical and background knowledge training. Practical training also takes place in the salons in which learners are placed. The bulk of assessment takes place in the training centre for most learners. A small amount of work-based assessment is carried out by MJT's assessors. There are 25 staff involved in management, training, assessment, recruitment and administration. There are seven MJT trainer-assessors, four peer mentors or trainee trainers, one lead internal verifier, three other internal verifiers and one member of staff who is close to qualifying. The assessment teams are appropriately qualified. The course director provides support for learners and acts as health and safety officer. Learners are recruited through Connexions, local hairdressing employers, local schools and direct contact with MJT by learners.

Hairdressing

Strengths

- good practical hairdressing skills
- good and improving success rates for advanced apprentices
- good teaching and learning activities
- good progression to advanced apprenticeships
- particularly good additional support

Weaknesses

- ineffective monitoring of learners' progress

Achievement and standards

26. Learners have good practical hairdressing skills. They generally attain practical hairdressing skills above what would be expected for their stage on an NVQ programme. All learners display good confidence, starting work on clients promptly and carrying out effective consultations. They have good skills in colouring, perming, cutting and styling hair. The work of advanced apprentices, many of whom have only recently started on the

programme, is particularly good, enabling them to make a commercial contribution to their salons. Learners display good skills with scissors in producing commercial styles. They confidently apply several colours to achieve fashionable results, while carefully observing appropriate salon health and safety procedures such as skin tests. They routinely ensure working areas are kept neat, clean and tidy and wear personal protective equipment as appropriate to the treatment. Learners' skills and successes in competitions and other hairdressing activities are celebrated extensively through displays at the MJT school. Several learners have had significant successes in national, regional, local and in-house competition work. MJT has retained a prestigious Cheshire hairdressing competition trophy for the past three years. Some learners have had photographs of their work published in trade magazines.

27. Success rates for advanced apprentices are good and improving. The 2005-06 overall success rates showed significant improvement from previous years to 59 per cent for both level 3 NVQ and apprenticeship frameworks. This rate is more than double the 2003-04 rate. All learners who completed their level 3 NVQ also completed key skills qualifications and technical certificates. The overall success rate for apprentices is satisfactory for 2005-06 at 47 per cent, especially considering the high number of learners with additional learning needs. The timely success rate is improving significantly for apprentices and was only four percentage points behind the overall success rate in 2005-06, at 43 per cent. The improvements have accompanied a doubling in the numbers of learners since 2003-04. MJT's analysis of success rates for the significant numbers of learners with additional learning needs is good and shows that these rates are very close to the overall learner success rates.

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	28	29	43	29	32
		timely	29	14	27	14	20
	2004-05	overall	22	55	40	55	29
		timely	22	23	28	23	20
Apprenticeships	2003-04	overall	32	66	62	63	49
		timely	19	37	38	32	30
	2004-05	overall	68	49	48	47	41
		timely	67	27	32	25	28

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

28. Good teaching and learning take place at the MJT School and at employers' salons. Twelve of the 13 sessions observed during inspection were good or outstanding. Staff are skilled at demonstrating practical techniques to learners. The ratio of learners to MJT's trainers/assessors in the MJT training school's practical salon sessions is particularly good, at a maximum of five learners to one member of staff. Learners get prompt help and their progress through a hairdressing service is closely observed by MJT's staff. This is particularly appreciated by learners who feel that it helps in developing their confidence.

Staff are relaxed and their attitude and use of humour helps learners to enjoy their training. In a level 3 NVQ advanced haircutting demonstration, seven learners were able to demonstrate that they had learnt new cutting techniques and how to use a new range of products. Learners enjoy their on-the-job salon practical training and are able to work on a range of good models. Their salon trainers demonstrate good teaching skills, particularly in demonstrating a range of practical skills.

29. MJT uses dynamic role-play to reinforce key points relating to salon practices and NVQ requirements. All of MJT's staff are involved, illustrating the good teamwork between the hairdressing and administrative staff. In addition, MJT makes good use of external speakers from organisations such as the local police force, hospital and a national bank to emphasise issues relating to learners' wellbeing. Demonstrations by well-known local hairdressers and visiting hairdressing specialists include technical training from product manufacturers, helping to give learners experience that widens their perception of the industry. Key skills qualifications are integrated well into the hairdressing NVQ and learners see them as a natural part of their apprenticeship. New learners in the current contract year are being given the chance to take additional key skills qualifications in information technology (IT) and improving their own learning. Around 20 per cent have said they will take these optional qualifications.

30. Progression from the apprenticeship programme to the advanced apprenticeship programme is particularly good. Learners receive good initial advice and guidance during interview and induction, which clearly shows them that the level 3 NVQ in hairdressing is the qualification required by the hairdressing industry. All learners are very positive about continuing their learning and this is advocated by MJT and supported by employers. The number of learners progressing is significant, as nationally the number of learners continuing to level 3 NVQs in hairdressing has been falling.

31. Learners receive particularly good additional support. MJT's recruitment and retention staff work closely with the hairdressing staff to identify factors that might affect learners' training, such as distance travelled to work, school examination results and previous attitudes to learning. Learners are 'risk-banded' at interview, after initial assessment or later in their programme if their personal circumstances change. Learners receive an initial assessment of their literacy and numeracy skills and their preferred learning styles. More further initial assessment then takes place with an external provider to provide a more detailed analysis of literacy and numeracy support needs. Additional support is provided for learners with dyslexia or literacy and numeracy support needs, as is pastoral support. Some learners receive individual support in the workplace as well as at the MJT school. Useful support packs in a hairdressing context have been produced and are used by learners. Learners welcome the support and accept it as an integral part of the training programme. Support given is recorded and reviewed, both in the training school and in the workplace. MJT has made much progress in researching suitable training materials and one member of staff has a lead role in supporting dyslexic learners. This role includes producing notes on coloured paper and coloured transparent overlays that aid reading. Staff teamwork and low numbers of learners to trainers are particularly effective in enabling learners to succeed. Skills for life is incorporated into all teaching.

32. The induction process is satisfactory overall, with appropriate coverage of health and safety, equality and diversity, the structure of the training programme and the way assessment will be carried out and recorded. It takes place over two days and innovative

role-play is used well to reinforce health and safety, equality of opportunity and customer care. Learners complete a 'runway' show where members of staff act as models for a particular theme, having their clothes, make-up and hair styled by the new learners. Learners confidently comper the final show where their models parade. This end to the second induction day is an activity that brings the learners and staff together as a group. The use of a well-known external speaker from the competition world helps to extend the range of opportunities available to learners in developing their practical skills. The induction process settles learners into their programme and gives them a thorough grounding in what is required of them.

33. Portfolios for level 2 and 3 NVQs are satisfactory. They record assessment and are appropriately referenced. Learners produce appropriate assignments, sometimes using good visual imagery such as a series of hand-drawn diagrams to illustrate the stages in a haircut. Learners make very little use of photographs of their hairdressing work in their portfolios as evidence of some of the good practical work and to reinforce links between on- and off-the-job training. Limited use is made of IT in producing assignments. There is satisfactory feedback on written assignment work. MJT uses header sheets which act as a reminder to staff on what should be in the assignment, and which are used to point out any incomplete areas to learners. The usefulness of written feedback varies. Some clearly identifies what was good about a learner's work, allowing the learner to carry this forward to their next assignment. Some feedback is too brief and cursory, particularly on the assignments that have been done well. In the written feedback, staff do encourage learners to come and see them to ensure they understand what has made an assignment unsatisfactory. Learners find the verbal feedback they receive particularly useful.

34. Progress reviews take place at least every 12 weeks and more frequently where a learner has been identified as 'at risk' because of personal circumstances or slow NVQ unit achievement. For these learners, reviews can be as frequent as once a week. Reviews are satisfactory overall and learners find them useful. MJT's staff, learners and employers are not always involved at the same time in reviewing learners' progress. This approach reduces the opportunity to make sufficient links between on- and off-the-job training and to make the most of learners' assessments by setting challenging targets. Some employers are using telephone interviews with MJT's staff to give their progress review information in advance of reviews, which then take place without them. Other employers give their review input in person but separately, before their learners set targets with MJT's staff. Targets set for learners are sometimes restricted by the space on review paperwork and discussions that take place are not recorded in sufficient detail, especially on health and safety and equality of opportunity. MJT has recognised these deficiencies and is piloting new paperwork that will help in prompting more detailed recording. NVQ portfolios are kept with learners' review records at the MJT school, so learners do not have them at work to remind them of their targets. Learners are set targets in their off-the-job training sessions that are clearer in showing how they can be met. MJT's staff have weekly target-setting meetings where learners at risk of missing targets on their individual learning plan are discussed.

35. Resources at the MJT school are satisfactory. The premises are spacious, being spread over four levels, and the various learning areas are used appropriately. For example, the large studio hosts demonstrations and role-play activities. It has a large plasma display that can be used for showing videos, giving computer presentation demonstrations and using the internet. The first-floor salon has good natural light and is

used for colouring work. The ground floor has a reception area, a barbering area and a mezzanine floor, while the lower ground floor is used for practice on styling blocks. MJT's city centre location is close to good transport links and there is a good supply of appropriate clients for the wide variety of hairdressing treatments required to meet the NVQ requirements. Clients are matched well to learners' training and NVQ assessment needs. Staff are appropriately qualified and have good commercial hairdressing experience, enabling them to demonstrate high levels of skills to motivate and inspire learners. Learners' workplace salons are generally well resourced and offer good salon-based training. Two employers carry out most of their learners' training in their salons, with learners receiving visiting support from MJT's staff and the chance to attend the MJT school if required. Appropriate resource packs devised by MJT's staff are routinely revised and updated. These are shared with learners' salons. The use of information and communications technology in learning is relatively new to MJT and some staff are beginning to use it as part of their resources in training sessions. A web-based training system that can be accessed at home by learners is being introduced but has not yet had the time to be used fully as part of the teaching curriculum.

36. Satisfactory assessment occurs at every MJT practical session for learners and in some workplaces. Assessors and learners use appropriate opportunities and mix and match assessment and training work on clients to meet learners' needs. In addition, MJT's peripatetic assessors visit learners' workplace salons, particularly where a learner needs to finish a unit. There are 10 work-based assessors in learners' salons, who carry out NVQ assessment of their learners.

37. Monitoring of learners' progress is ineffective. There is no overall system that MJT's staff can use to gauge the progress of learners through their NVQ and additional apprenticeship qualifications. Staff look in each learner's portfolio to examine individual progress monitoring sheets of their achievements, which is time-consuming. In addition, it makes it difficult to identify quickly where problems are beginning to occur and when learners are in danger of slipping behind. There continue to be problems in learners closing down and completing NVQ units. Learners have insufficient effective detailed targets. MJT does not have an effective system of allocating staff to learners to support the planning, monitoring and support of progress throughout a learner's programme. This is despite the 'at risk' system, weekly staff meetings and reference to individual learning plan target dates at progress reviews.

Leadership and management

38. MJT's staff work particularly well together as a team. The training school presents a particularly welcoming environment. All staff are enthusiastic about hairdressing. They encourage learners to develop skills and to take part in extra hairdressing activities such as competition work. MJT's staff are good role models for learners. Staff training events are attended well and help to keep staff up to date with current commercial hairdressing trends. Staff are taking key skills qualifications to level 2 or higher. Programme development is responsive to learners' feedback in focus groups and surveys. All staff, led by the managing director who is a hairdresser, are keen to continuously improve MJT's programmes.

39. Equality and diversity and the relevance of equality of opportunity to salon work are integrated regularly into hairdressing role-play activities to reinforce their importance. For example, equality at salon interviews and in treating clients and colleagues courteously

and appropriately are emphasised. Visual displays and literature further reinforce information given to learners at their MJT induction. Despite this, learners' recall of equality of opportunity and diversity varies from being good to just satisfactory. The MJT school is in Manchester city centre. It is accessible for learners and clients with restricted mobility and it is close to bus, train, taxi and tram transport routes.

40. Satisfactory internal verification takes place to support assessors and to quality assure assessment decisions. Learners are very aware of appeals and complaints procedures and their awareness is checked as part of the internal verification process. The results of external verification are shared with staff and regular meetings are held with assessors where standardisation activities and updates take place. Work-based assessors' attendance at these meetings is poor. The results are communicated to them in visits to the workplace and the activities are reinforced to them there. The range of assessment activities is appropriately sampled. Assessors are risk-banded according to their experience and the frequency of their observation is set accordingly. Planning is carried out on a monthly basis and is heavily reliant on the key internal verifier, who knows the system well. There is insufficient planning of an annual assessment plan for effective monitoring. MJT's staff, learners and employers are actively involved in MJT's self-assessment process. The hairdressing self-assessment report grade is the same as that given by inspectors.

