

INSPECTION REPORT

HMP Durham

22 September 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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HMP Durham

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INSPECTION REPORT

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROVIDER

1. HMP Durham is a Category B local prison for adult men, which serves the northeast of England, but until April 2005 it was a high security facility taking both male and female offenders. The prison was opened in the early 19th century on a city centre site and is constrained by the physical restrictions imposed by its design. In March 2005, HMP Durham was selected for the Prison Service's performance improvement planning process and this has led to a period of major change. In May 2006, a new governor was appointed and a new management team established to drive forward the improvements identified in the establishment improvement plan.

2. HMP Durham endures tremendous population pressures. The operational capacity is 921, and at the time of the inspection, the population was 913. The offenders are serving sentences ranging from less than three months to life imprisonment, but the average length of stay is nine to 10 weeks. Fifty-three per cent of the offenders are aged between 21 and 30, 30 per cent are between 31 and 40, and 17 per cent are between 41 and 80. The prison has also seen a recent increase in the number of foreign national offenders and detainees, and these now make up 5.6 per cent of the total population. Just over 11 per cent of the population are from minority ethnic groups.

3. The head of learning and skills has been in post for four months and was appointed to instil a learning and skills culture across the whole establishment. The learning and skills mission statement for HMP Durham is to 'Improve the life and employment chances of prisoners through the delivery of high-quality learning and skills provision.'

4. In July 2005, Newcastle College was commissioned by the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) to provide the learning and skills service for the prison. The education department has an operational manager and 37 staff, comprising 21 full-time, three fractional and 13 part-time sessional tutors. There are two vacant posts that are due to be filled in November 2006.

5. There are 53 full-time places on 16-week vocational training courses in brickwork, painting and decorating, and woodworking. The availability of qualifications in painting and decorating, and woodworking is new. The prison also runs an industrial cleaning course, but this was temporarily closed during the inspection.

6. There are 310 workplaces available in the morning and 310 in the afternoon. One hundred and sixty-one are in contract workshops and the remainder are in the prison's stores and kitchens, waste reclamation, cleaning and orderly work. Offenders are involved in a range of work including computer data entry, manufacturing, net-making, sewing machine repair and clothing reclamation. However, the sewing machines in the clothing reclamation area were temporarily out of use during the inspection. There is no accreditation for the work.

7. The prison's physical education staff hold a range of coaching/leadership and instructing qualifications. The gym holds a maximum of 40 offenders at a time. It has a range of cardio-vascular and resistance machines as well as free weights and lifting

stations. No vocational programmes are offered as staffing levels are currently low. Three staff members are on long-term sick leave, and recreational sessions are sometimes cancelled because of staff shortages.

8. The library is provided by Durham County Council Library Service. Two librarians and four prison orderlies work fulltime in the library. It is reasonably sized and located conveniently in the education area. The access is satisfactory with opening times during weekday mornings and afternoons. A small number of offenders in full-time work have difficulty getting to the library during opening hours. Access is also sometimes limited by prison staff shortages. The library provides a very welcoming environment and was well used during the inspection. Offenders enjoy attending the library and appreciate the help they receive from library staff.

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS

Grade 3

9. **The overall effectiveness of the provision is satisfactory.** More specifically, provision is good in information and communications technology (ICT) and satisfactory in construction, planning and the built environment, and preparation for life and work. The prison's leadership and management of learning and skills are satisfactory, as are its arrangements for equality of opportunity and quality improvement.

10. **The inspection team had some confidence in the reliability of the self-assessment process.** The head of learning and skills produced a self-assessment report soon after taking up her post. Since then, there has been regular self-assessment and the report has been revised. There was good consultation with the subcontracting college, individual staff, and representatives of the prison industries. The process identified several strengths, but some of these were no more than normal practice. The text of the self-assessment report does not always support the claimed strengths. Most of the self-assessment grades were higher than those given by inspectors. HMP Durham has post-inspection action plans to remedy shortcomings identified by the 2003 full inspection and the 2005 quality monitoring inspection.

11. **The provider has demonstrated that it has sufficient capacity to make improvements.** The prison has had significant difficulties in maintaining or improving the quality of the provision since the previous inspection in 2003. The quality monitoring inspection in 2005 judged that the provision had deteriorated and standards had fallen. However, good progress has since been made in a short time, particularly since new staff have been appointed and a revised learning and skills strategy has been in place. Relationships across the prison have improved and there is a shared vision for the future. There are good management structures and partnerships in place to drive improvements.

KEY CHALLENGES FOR HMP DURHAM:

- improve referral, selection and recruitment process to ensure individual offenders' needs are met
- provide equal access to education and training for all offenders

- introduce a reliable management information system to aid management decision-making and planning
- improve the quality assurance arrangements
- implement planned improvements to ensure offenders' individual learning and skills needs are met from entry to exit

GRADES

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

Grades awarded at inspection

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

Construction, planning and the built environment			3
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade	
<i>Construction crafts</i> Other government-funded provision	46	3	

Information and communications technology			2
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade	
<i>ICT for users</i> Other government-funded provision	50	2	

Preparation for life and work			3
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade	
<i>Literacy and numeracy</i> Other government-funded provision	72	3	
<i>Independent living and leisure skills</i> Other government-funded provision	39	3	

ABOUT THE INSPECTION

12. Construction crafts, ICT and preparation for life and work were inspected and graded. Inspectors considered all aspects of learning and skills at the prison including physical education and health promotion.

Number of inspectors	5
Number of inspection days	18
Number of learners interviewed	101
Number of staff interviewed	56
Number of visits	1

Leadership and Management

Strengths

- strong strategic direction for learning and skills across the establishment
- good organisation to support effective offender management
- good emphasis and focus on quality improvement through the sharing of good practice

Weaknesses

- insufficient implementation of revised procedures
- insufficient monitoring of trends in learners' participation, attendance and progression to support management action
- incomplete quality assurance arrangements

Construction, planning and the built environment

Strengths

- good teaching and learning
- good arrangements for learners' progression
- good strategies for the development of vocational training

Weaknesses

- insufficient communication of learners' literacy and numeracy support needs
- insufficient monitoring of learners' progress
- insufficiently established operational management of the vocational training

Information and communications technology

Strengths

- good achievement of qualifications
- much good teaching and development of learners' skills

- good range of programmes to meet learners' needs

Weaknesses

- some inappropriate accommodation and equipment to support teaching and learning

Preparation for life and work

Strengths

- good achievement of qualifications
- good development of learners' literacy and numeracy skills
- good teaching and learning activities in literacy and numeracy that engage learners

Weaknesses

- insufficiently developed life skills curriculum
- inadequate support for English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) learners
- inappropriate arrangements for the assessment of some offenders' literacy and numeracy support needs

WHAT LEARNERS LIKE ABOUT HMP DURHAM:

- the staff in education - 'they are friendly and helpful'
- ICT - 'learning lots of new skills', 'the training is very good'
- the prison officers - 'they are friendly and caring'
- the teachers - 'they are brilliant'
- 'getting qualifications'
- the library staff - 'they are really helpful'
- the changes that have taken place - 'the prison has changed for the better', 'staff attitudes are more positive'

WHAT LEARNERS THINK HMP DURHAM COULD IMPROVE:

- 'more access and incentive to go to education'
- the length of the morning sessions - 'they need to be shorter'
- 'the arrangements for getting into work and education'
- Physical Education (PE) - 'more recreational activities not just gym'
- 'the opportunity to do a plastering course'

DETAILED INSPECTION FINDINGS

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Grade 3

Strengths

- strong strategic direction for learning and skills across the establishment
- good organisation to support effective offender management
- good emphasis and focus on quality improvement through the sharing of good practice

Weaknesses

- insufficient implementation of revised procedures
- insufficient monitoring of trends in learners' participation, attendance and progression to support management action
- incomplete quality assurance arrangements

13. There is strong strategic direction to improve the availability and quality of learning and skills provision across the establishment. The new strategy is communicated well, and staff and offenders understand the thinking behind the changes that are being made. There is a shared vision across the prison, supported well by the new governor. Staff have confidence in the direction that managers have taken to improve the education, training and accreditation opportunities for offenders while also focusing on a successful local resettlement strategy. The head of learning and skills carried out a useful and thorough review to assess the relevance and value of the learning and skills provision. Following this, a new learning and skills strategy has been introduced, but it is too soon to judge fully the effect of this. Clear strategic leadership provides effective links both to local skills needs and to potential employment routes. Analysis indicates that most learners are from the Northeast, and the prison's local status has led to a major change in its culture. A detailed development plan is effectively focusing on priorities for improvement. The partnership working between the subcontracting college and the prison is very effective and supportive of the new strategy. Improved resources provide a comfortable and conducive teaching and learning environment.

14. There is good promotion and management of staff development. Many staff take part in training, and at least 30 hold qualified teacher status or an equivalent. A detailed staff skills audit records existing skills and qualifications as well as further training needs.

15. There is good organisation at the prison to support effective offender management. The head of learning and skills has strategic responsibility for, and control over, all the activities that affect the prison's ability to meet offenders' individual education and training needs. There has been appropriate investment in the recently restructured learning and skills department. Highly experienced staff, many new in post, are equipped to encourage learning and the acquisition of skills across the prison. The department is well organised, and staff have clear roles and responsibilities focused on improving the quantity and quality of the learning and skills provision. A member of the team is effectively employed to ensure offenders attend the activities that they are allocated to. Any failures to attend are reported daily at residential meetings and prompt action is taken. Attendance has

improved. The prison has effective links with another local prison, sharing a national vocational qualification (NVQ) co-ordinator who works in both establishments. Most offenders transfer from HMP Durham to this establishment, and the NVQ co-ordinator provides a good opportunity to maintain continuity and progression for learners. However, the effect of this has yet to be measured or monitored.

16. In the short time that the revised learning and skills strategy has been in place, good progress has been made in many areas. However, the revised processes have not all been implemented. Operational management is not fully effective. Participation in education is low. The recent move from full-time to part-time education had led to a reduction in class sizes until further recruitment took place. Too many offenders remain in their cells until the new activity allocation process comes fully into effect. The current induction and initial assessment procedures are poor. The new arrangements aim to remedy the weaknesses in the current system but they are not yet fully operational. Accreditation for the work areas is being developed but is not yet in place. Vocational training is planned for the PE department but staff shortages have inhibited progress.

17. There is insufficient monitoring of trends in learners' participation, attendance and progression to support management action. Although there is a reporting procedure for attendance, it is inefficient and does not allow managers to monitor attendance patterns on a daily or weekly basis across all learning and skills activities. Managers have insufficient access to reliable data or reports to use as management tools. Plans are in hand for a system that will capture and use data from individual learning plans to enable reporting and analysis to take place.

Equality of opportunity

Contributory grade 3

18. There is a strong focus on identifying and meeting individual offenders' needs and developing their potential. The new head of learning and skills has carried out an effective review of learning and skills provision at the prison, and this has led to radical change. The learning and skills offer at HMP Durham is now geared around meeting the needs and aspirations of the prison population rather than filling available spaces, which had been the case previously. When offenders enter the prison, they are interviewed by the new offender management unit. The interview identifies their learning priorities in order to help deal with their offending behaviour and help them take part in learning activities that will help them with resettlement. All offenders are encouraged to attend appropriate education, training or work activities. There is a high level of mutual respect between learners, education and training staff, and prison officers. During the inspection, learners interviewed showed a good understanding of equality and diversity.

19. Courses in education are now offered on a part-time basis to enable more learners to take part in them. This arrangement is recent, and current participation rates are low. Vocational programmes offered are full time. In the main education centre, classes are one hour longer in the morning than in the afternoon. This means that some learners get less learning time. The prison works hard to meet the needs of all learners but there are no higher-level courses available and little provision for the small number of older offenders. The prison is aware of this and is seeking to improve the curriculum offer.

20. In addition to part-time education opportunities, other initiatives have been introduced recently to increase participation in education. For example, there is a well-managed curriculum in the healthcare centre which provides a calm environment for

those unable to attend formal lessons. Classes on two of the residential wings offer accredited literacy and numeracy and art courses for learners who find it difficult to cope with more formal styles of learning. Enthusiastic and well-motivated prison officers provide good personal support in these classrooms, often acting as classroom assistants.

21. Every effort is made to ensure that offenders are given support to help them settle in quickly during induction. However, there is insufficient timely and appropriate information, advice and guidance to enable them to access support for their language needs. The prison has a list of offenders and staff who speak a range of languages, but does not provide versions of course information in languages other than English. Much of the course information is complex and is not written clearly, but the prison makes good use of wing representatives to disseminate and explain it. It is intended that some learners will participate in and contribute to the quality improvement group meetings.

22. The pay structure has been reviewed and a new one is currently being implemented. This will reward achievement and will not penalise those choosing to go to education. A review of the labour allocation process is also under way to ensure equitable access to jobs. Jobs are comprehensively risk assessed, as are individual offenders.

23. There are appropriate written equal opportunities policies and procedures that cover harassment, complaints and appeals. Copies are displayed throughout the prison. The employment application process is not well organised, and some learners wait several weeks before being offered a place on a course in education or training, even though there are vacancies. Senior staff regularly and thoroughly monitor participation in education, training and work to establish trends among specific groups of learners. They pass on their findings to groups such as the race relations and diversity groups. Information is analysed at course and wing level and any anomalies are dealt with and followed up regularly. Staff training in equality and diversity is satisfactory. Satisfactory arrangements are usually made to allow learners to worship and carry out religious activities in a suitable facility and environment. The library staff make good arrangements for learners who cannot attend the library to access books on the wings, but this service is limited in scale. The library has a good variety of fiction and non-fiction books in foreign languages.

24. During their induction, all offenders with disabilities are referred to the disability liaison officer for interview. Where possible, such offenders are housed in appropriate cells. There is restricted access for learners with limited mobility to attend education in the main centre and vocational training. The main education department and library are at the top of six flights of stairs. There is a lift but offenders are not able to use it. Some of the contract workshops and vocational training areas are above ground floor and are inaccessible to wheelchairs users.

Quality improvement

Contributory grade 3

25. There is a good emphasis and focus on quality improvement through the sharing and use of good practice. Since the quality monitoring inspection in September 2005, when the provision was judged to have deteriorated, there has been a rapid turnaround. There is now good collaboration and liaison with the college contracted to provide the education provision. The expertise in the college has been used to good effect to support the head of learning and skills to effect rapid change. There is effective sharing of information, policies, procedures and key processes. The college provides good support,

particularly by way of providing staff to observe teaching within the prison provision. This is in addition to the main contract. Additional hours have been secured to provide additional information, advice and guidance workers. Communication across all aspects of learning and skills has improved significantly. Education, vocational workshops and work areas now fall under the same management structure and have a common aim. There are good achievement rates for qualifications in ICT and literacy and numeracy, and in brickwork the rates have increased significantly. Learners can now gain accreditation in painting and decorating and in woodwork. A conveniently located learning centre is soon to open next to the workshops, to support learners' educational needs and provide access to education for offenders who work full time in the workshops.

26. The prison managers regularly seek the views of offenders, including those who are not currently involved in learning. The action taken as a result of the consultation and feedback process is promoted well. Eye-catching posters list what has been fed back and what action the prison has taken. This feedback process is helpful in developing confidence in the effectiveness of the communication process, as well as promoting the value of learners' comments.

27. The self-assessment process is satisfactory. The head of learning and skills produced the most recent report very soon after taking up her post. The process included individual meetings with all staff as well as with small groups representing the prison industries. The current self-assessment report includes long lists of strengths, but the supporting text does not always relate to and support them. Action-planning is also satisfactory. Post-inspection action plans are in place to remedy issues highlighted at both the 2003 and the 2005 inspections. There is also a detailed development plan for the provision.

28. Assessment and verification of accredited courses is satisfactory. All processes meet awarding body requirements, and external verifiers' reports are positive. Two new programmes received awarding body accreditation in August this year.

29. The policies and procedures do not yet cover the full range of current or intended provision. The quality improvement system is not yet complete. Team meetings are not yet formally developed. In the past, HMP Durham had a quality improvement group, but although there are plans to reinstate this, it is not yet functioning. The head of learning and skills has created terms of reference and indicated suitable participants for the group.

AREAS OF LEARNING

Construction, planning and the built environment

Grade 3

Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Construction crafts Other government-funded provision	46	3

30. There are 46 learners on construction training programmes, including brickwork, woodwork, and painting and decorating. For 43 of the learners, training comprises 10 half-day sessions a week, including a half day allocated to physical exercise and the library. Three learners on a brickwork programme have five half-day sessions a week over 16 weeks. During their training, learners can gain a nationally recognised foundation certificate in health and safety, and the construction skills certification scheme card. Learners in brickwork are trained in the vocational training workshop by a tutor from the education department and take the brickwork basic craft award. Assessment takes place in the workshops. The painting and decorating, and woodworking programmes have just been accredited. Painting and decorating learners work towards a basic craft award, and woodworking learners towards a level 1 NVQ in performing manufacturing operations. There is a dedicated prison instructional officer in each workshop, both of whom are occupationally qualified.

Strengths

- good teaching and learning
- good arrangements for learners' progression
- good strategies for the development of vocational training

Weaknesses

- insufficient communication of learners' literacy and numeracy support needs
- insufficient monitoring of learners' progress
- insufficiently established operational management of the vocational training

Achievement and standards

31. The only programme that has had learners working towards an accredited qualification is bricklaying. The success rate in the bricklaying craft qualification is satisfactory. In 2005-06, 57 learners enrolled on the course, of whom 35 per cent completed the course and a further 25 per cent were transferred to other prisons. Fourteen achieved the full qualification, an increase of 55 per cent over the previous year. Each learner achieved an average of four units, double the number in the previous year. The standard of learners' work is satisfactory. Learners in woodworking are making garden models, tables and garden furniture of a very good quality. Learners are also demonstrating a good understanding of health and safety.

The quality of provision

32. Teaching and learning are good, as is the development of practical skills. The lessons observed were all graded at least satisfactory, and most were good. Learners develop good skills in using a variety of hand tools such as trowels, saws, chisels and planes. Their ability to measure accurately, read drawings and calculate is significantly improved. Learners' confidence is greatly enhanced as their practical skills develop. The tutors support the learners very well in developing their skills. They give good, clear demonstrations to improve learners' skills, but only after they have carefully challenged the learners to show how much they have learnt. Learners take an interest in the well-planned practical tasks. The moderation of the programme in bricklaying is very thorough. The assessors are observed and given constructive feedback. Sampling plans ensure that all aspects of the programme are moderated well.

33. There are good arrangements to accommodate learners' progression. The average length of stay for offenders at HMP Durham is between nine and 12 weeks. Most of those who are transferred out are sent to HMP Acklington, another Northeast prison. Both prisons use Newcastle College as their main provider of education and training. HMP Durham has taken advantage of this to enable learners transferred to HMP Acklington to continue their course. The same NVQ co-ordinator is used by both prisons to ensure that the systems at the two prisons are compatible. Both offer the same qualifications in construction to allow an easy continuation on the programme, and the progress they have already made at HMP Durham is recorded well and passed on to HMP Acklington.

34. The workshop resources in bricklaying and woodworking are satisfactory. There is a wide range of hand tools in the workshop, and they are maintained well. The materials available are of good industrial standard. The accommodation restricts the number of learners but is perfectly satisfactory for the number admitted to the programmes. The workshop resources in painting and decorating are good. The painting and decorating workshop is well equipped with booths that offer the full range of surfaces, including doors, windows, ceilings, fireplaces, recesses, covings and ceilings, to enable learners to complete their qualification. The standard of housekeeping in this workshop is very high. Stripped wallpaper is bagged as learners strip the walls and the floors are cleaned after each task. There are sufficient power tools available to meet learners' needs.

35. There is insufficient communication of learners' support needs to training staff. All offenders receive an appropriate assessment of their literacy, numeracy and language skills during induction. This is followed up for some with a full diagnostic assessment. The education department administers this well. The results of the tests are forwarded to the sentence planning department, which uses them to help determine which offenders are allocated to vocational training or education. However, the staff who deal with offenders in the workshops are given too little information on the outcome of initial or diagnostic assessments, and on any particular support that learners may need. The prison is aware of this weakness and plans to remedy it using dedicated skills for life staff based at a learning centre next to the workshops. Skills for life is the government's strategy on training in literacy, numeracy and the use of language.

36. Learners' progress is inadequately monitored. There is no overall learning plan. The bricklaying instructor has a learning plan for the vocational qualification and the basic skills

tutor has a separate one for literacy, numeracy and language. They do not adequately share this information. Learners' progress in terms of unit achievement is satisfactorily monitored and recorded, but learners are not set clear milestones against which their progress can be measured. The learning plan used for construction programmes is inadequate. There is no provision for recording training objectives, the details of basic skills assessments, or how learners' literacy and numeracy needs will be met in painting and decorating, and woodworking. Progress is not recorded in learners' portfolios. The tutor keeps an overall monitoring sheet in his office, and learners rely on this to understand what progress they have made. They do not know whether the progress they have made is appropriate for the amount of time they have been on the programme. There are no progress reviews. No targets are set for learners and there are no opportunities to monitor their progress. The prison has identified this weakness and has plans to rectify it.

Leadership and management

37. There is a clear strategic direction for vocational training. All the programmes are accredited now. Managers have carefully considered the qualifications selected, to ensure the programme is of the correct type and level and can be dovetailed into the programmes at HMP Acklington. Offenders transferred to HMP Acklington will be able to continue with the course they started at HMP Durham. The staff and learners are well aware of the strategy to focus on accredited training. They understand how training fits into the overall plan for the resettlement of offenders. There is good staff development to ensure that the tutors are qualified to teach and assess these programmes. The tutors work well as an integrated team, regardless of whether they are employed by the prison or the college.

38. The operational management of vocational training is insufficiently established. Although the NVQ co-ordinator and the instructors are working well there are no formal team meetings and actions are not recorded well. The programmes for the learners are planned well, with each task laid out and followed. There is insufficient performance data and what there is, is not analysed well or used to improve performance. There are insufficient systems to monitor the quality of the provision. Most of the staff have only recently taken up their present position. Many of the roles are new and the staff are busy establishing processes and procedures. The provider is aware of these shortcomings and has plans to remedy them. There are too few occupationally qualified staff to cover for absences, planned or otherwise.

39. Arrangements to promote equality of opportunity are satisfactory. There is a good culture of treating everyone fairly. Staff receive regular training in equality of opportunity. Learners are aware of the role of equality and diversity in the prison. A recent influx of Eastern European learners into the workshops has been assimilated well.

40. The one programme that has been running for any time, which is brickwork, has been moderated well. The full range of activities has been covered in the sample. The assessor has received thorough and constructively critical feedback when he has been observed assessing.

41. The self-assessment report was reasonably accurate, although it did not contain sufficient evidence to support the judgements. The staff were reasonably involved in the self-assessment process.

Information and communications technology**Grade 2**

Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
<i>ICT for users</i> Other government-funded provision	50	2

42. HMP Durham offers ICT courses through Newcastle College. They are held in the main education centre, the healthcare centre and on 'D' residential wing, and are co-ordinated by a curriculum leader (vocational skills), who teaches five sessions a week. There is one full-time member of staff and one who works half time. They are supplemented by four part-time sessional staff. The learndirect provision has recently been accredited, and is provided by an external training provider. Eight learners attend full or part time. There are approximately 50 learners on a range of ICT courses including basic computer literacy and other nationally accredited courses in word and text processing, mail merging, and business presentation.

Strengths

- good achievement of qualifications
- much good teaching and development of learners' skills
- good range of programmes to meet learners' needs

Weaknesses

- some inappropriate accommodation and equipment to support teaching and learning

Achievement and standards

43. Achievement of qualifications is good. In the past year, 175 learners have enrolled on courses. They have achieved 126 full awards and 364 units of qualifications. The prison allows offenders to stay for up to 10 weeks at the establishment to complete their qualifications. The new basic computer literacy course is popular, and, to date, learners have achieved 24 full qualifications and 141 units. There is also good achievement on the examination-based qualification in information technology, with 29 full awards and 131 units accredited. The retention rate is high at over 90 per cent for those learners who are not transferred or released. The learndirect provision has only recently started to offer ICT qualifications and it is too early to measure achievement. Many offenders work in a data processing contract workshop and develop good keyboard skills, but this work is not accredited. Literacy and numeracy support is integrated with the teaching programmes and learners in the main education centre are able to take adult literacy qualifications at levels 1 and 2 when they are ready. Many achieve the qualification at the first attempt.

44. Learners display good standards of work. Those interviewed said that they had not touched a computer before entering prison, but within two weeks had developed skills and competence in word processing, using presentation software and working with spreadsheets. Punctuality is satisfactory but the attendance level varies. Learners are sometimes absent because of the requirements of prison regimes.

The quality of provision

45. There is much good teaching. Experienced and well-qualified tutors work well to support learners and help them develop competence and self-confidence. Teaching is well structured and staff use their own experience well to develop resource materials. One tutor used the Titanic as a theme, following it through from word processing text to designing an animated presentation. Learners' work is celebrated on wall displays. Tutors use good questioning techniques to help learners develop their understanding, and very effective demonstrations to reinforce learning. They use an effective mix of formal teaching arrangements and coaching and workshop support. Learners who have achieved qualifications are often used as informal classroom assistants and this builds their self-esteem and confidence.

46. Programmes are particularly well designed to meet the needs of individual learners. The ICT courses accommodate the needs of learners ranging from those who have few or no computing skills to those wishing to take advanced courses. There is a wide range of courses which cover, for example, mail merging, desktop publishing and text processing. Learners can work at their own pace and choose from a menu of modules at different levels. A prison newspaper is used to support learning and developing desktop publishing skills. Most learners are keen to learn and state that they really enjoy ICT courses.

47. The initial assessment process is thorough and includes a computer-based learning style preference assessment. Tutors use the outcomes to adapt teaching techniques to individual needs. They use individual learning plans very effectively to identify clear and detailed targets for each learner. Tutors regularly review progress with the learners. They maintain very good progress-monitoring documents and records of achievement.

48. Assessment is well planned and meets individual learners' needs. Those learners who enter the prison having completed all or part of a qualification are offered the chance to continue with their qualification or move to another level. Staff ensure that when learners are transferred, the appropriate records are sent on to the receiving establishment.

49. Some accommodation and resources are inappropriate and inadequate. In the healthcare centre and on 'D' residential wing, the seating and desk arrangements at the computers do not meet health and safety best practice requirements. In the healthcare centre there is inadequate space for computers and the desks used for computer equipment have to be taken to the teaching area before the session can begin. The teaching room in the main education department is large and accommodates two classes at a time. There are occasions when learners are distracted, and teachers often use different lighting arrangements for each area which affects the environment for learning.

Leadership and management

50. The curriculum is managed well. The team of ICT teachers is led by a curriculum leader who is responsible to the vocational skills curriculum leader. The skills for life curriculum leader manages the skills for life team. The vocational skills curriculum leader works at the prison and teaches at least five sessions a week. ICT staff meet regularly and minutes of their meetings are available to all staff. There are examples of verifiers' reports that require action, and evidence that these have been dealt with and changes made to the programme quality assurance processes. Peer observation is carried out and staff

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regularly share experiences and practices. At the time of inspection a private training provider was providing learndirect courses. These are separate from Newcastle College's ICT provision, and the lines of communication are not always clear. There is some confusion about the courses being offered.

51. The self-assessment report was reasonably accurate, and inspectors agreed with some of the strengths and weaknesses and with the grade given for ICT. However, some of the strengths were deemed to be no more than normal practice.

Preparation for life and work**Grade 3**

Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
<i>Literacy and numeracy</i> Other government-funded provision	72	3
<i>Independent living and leisure skills</i> Other government-funded provision	39	3

52. One hundred and eleven learners are on preparation for life and work programmes. Of these, 72 are on programmes in literacy and/or numeracy from entry level to level 2, 14 are on courses in life and social skills, and 25 are on art courses. Learners have the opportunity to gain externally accredited qualifications including national awards in literacy and numeracy. Courses are part time and take place in the education department, the health centre, the workshop and two residential wings. Short courses in food hygiene and health and safety are also provided.

Strengths

- good achievement of qualifications
- good development of learners' literacy and numeracy skills
- good teaching and learning activities in literacy and numeracy that engage learners

Weaknesses

- insufficiently developed life skills curriculum
- inadequate support for English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) learners
- inappropriate arrangements for the assessment of some offenders' literacy and numeracy support needs

Achievement and standards

53. The success rates for accredited qualifications are good. Most learners who attend accredited education courses achieve the qualifications. HMP Durham's achievement data for the past three years has been collated and analysed, but as it is recorded by enrolment rather than learner, the analysis of individual achievement is difficult. In 2005-06, 161 of the 163 learners who took literacy tests at level 1, and 106 of the 110 learners who took numeracy tests at level 1, were successful. The 245 learners who took the food hygiene certificate were all successful, as were the 157 learners taking the health and safety test.

54. Learners produce good work in sessions, developing skills and confidence in art and in using literacy and numeracy. Learners' art work is successfully entered for Koestler awards. Learners develop confidence in using numbers in everyday life and work, and improve their skills in reading, writing and communication. In one session observed, learners acquired good skills in money management. Learners easily recount their level of progress and many have improved their skills from entry level to level 1. Standards of behaviour in sessions are good and learners' morale is high. Tutors and prison officers create a relaxed atmosphere and show respect to offenders. Learners in the sessions

observed were courteous and polite to each other and to their tutors. Punctuality is satisfactory.

The quality of provision

55. Teaching and learning are good. Lessons are well planned and contain a good range of stimulating activities. Resources are good and tutors use them well to engage learners in literacy and numeracy sessions. In one literacy session to develop learners' understanding of adjectives, entry level learners were each given a sherbet lemon sweet and had to describe its appearance before they ate it, and then the tastes, sounds and textures as they ate it. In a good art lesson, learners experimented with pastels and produced a high standard of work that was immediately mounted and displayed on the walls. Learning plans are satisfactory. Learners are set specific targets related to schemes of work and the results of initial and diagnostic assessment. Tutors review learners' targets and progress at monthly intervals. They work well together to develop appropriate schemes of work for the literacy and numeracy curriculum from entry level to level 2.

56. Participation rates are low. The recent change from full-time to part-time courses and the revised application process have not yet had a positive effect on the provision, and there are currently too few learners in education. Many of the classes observed had only two, three or four learners in them. More than 50 per cent of the learners in the prison have been assessed as having literacy or numeracy skills below level 1, but only 72 learners are currently receiving support.

57. The social and life skills curriculum is insufficiently developed and marketed, and the participation rate is very low. There are too few courses that are relevant to learners' personal needs, sentence plan and future lives. The current programme includes four modules which are, citizenship, healthy living, budget and money management, and personal development. The content of some of the modules is dull and does not sufficiently stimulate learners or meet their needs. This was recognised in the self-assessment report. In preparation for work, learners have a good opportunity to gain relevant qualifications in health and safety, first aid and food hygiene.

58. Arrangements for the assessment and guidance of ESOL learners are inadequate. Written information is only available in English, and the prison does not use interpreters to help the learners understand assessment, guidance and induction into the education department. The process for identifying ESOL learners in the prison and giving them adequate information and guidance is too slow and insufficiently developed. It takes too long to carry out diagnostic assessments and develop individual learning plans.

59. The process of initial assessment of learners' literacy and numeracy needs is inappropriate for some offenders. Offenders are assessed on the induction wing on their third day in the prison, but the room used is too small and some find it intimidating. The tutor has no prior knowledge of the offenders before carrying out the assessments, and administers the same test to all, regardless of their reading ability. Some offenders cannot read, some are foreign nationals, and some are too distressed at this stage of their imprisonment to take the tests. New arrangements for the induction and assessment of offenders' literacy, numeracy and language needs are to be introduced within the next few weeks.

Leadership and management

60. Communication is good with curriculum teams and managers meeting formally and informally. There are clearly defined roles and responsibilities for the curriculum leaders and tutors. Staff development is good, and there is an appropriate focus on ensuring staff have or are working towards relevant qualifications.

61. Course reviews are satisfactory and examine strengths and weakness against the Common Inspection Framework. The self-assessment process is satisfactory and includes staff and learners. Learners' views are sought at the end of their programme, the results are subject to some analysis, and action is taken as a result. For example, in response to learners' views the arrangements for covering absent staff have been significantly improved. All tutors are now required to provide a bank of lesson plans for their classes that can be used by the regular cover staff.

62. The self-assessment report is satisfactory and identified most of the weaknesses found during the inspection. Development planning is satisfactory and is focused appropriately on continuous improvement. However, some aspects of the provision were identified as strengths when they are no more than normal practice. Internal verification is satisfactory. All tutors are observed annually using the college's observation process. Tutors who do not achieve a grade 2 are supported and observed again until they do so. Equality of opportunity is satisfactory, with education provision being extended to those in health care and those who are identified as having poor coping skills in the prison.

