

REINSPECTION REPORT

UK Training and Development Reinspection

16 February 2007



ADULT LEARNING
INSPECTORATE

Adult Learning Inspectorate

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

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

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

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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REINSPECTION REPORT

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROVIDER

1. UK Training and Development (UKTD) is a privately owned training company, set up in 1998 and based in Hemel Hempstead. It contracts with five local Learning and Skills Councils (LSCs), namely Hertfordshire, London West, Surrey, Berkshire and Milton Keynes, and Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire, to provide work-based learning for young people. The company is well known as a provider of hairdressing training but also has two advanced apprentices in business management. The business management training was not graded because there were so few learners at the time of the reinspection. Around 7 per cent of UKTD's training is privately funded.

2. UKTD currently has 302 hairdressing learners, all of them employed. Of these, 258 are apprentices and 44 are advanced apprentices. All assessment and training is completed in the workplace. UKTD has a structured 'Pathway' scheme of work that lists the training that should ideally be taking place in employer's salons, with responsibility shared between employers and UKTD's staff. Learners receive visits from UKTD's training consultants who train them in hairdressing and key skills. At salons where there are no work-based assessors, UKTD carries out the salon assessments. There are 42 staff in all, including the managing director and two consultants. The senior management team comprises the managing director, the field manager, the quality field manager, the administration manager and the manager responsible for finance and reports. All the staff are based in the offices in Hemel Hempstead. UKTD has 14 training consultants who work directly with hairdressing learners in the workplace and who are responsible for managing all of the learners' training. Support for key skills training and additional learning support is provided by a team of seven specialist skills for life training consultants. Skills for life is the government's strategy on training in literacy, numeracy and the use of language. The field manager monitors the work of the training staff and the progress of learners.

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS

Reinspection Grade 3

3. **The overall effectiveness of the provision is satisfactory.** UKTD's leadership and management are satisfactory, as are its arrangements for equality of opportunity and quality improvement. Its provision in retail and commercial enterprises, specifically in hairdressing, is also satisfactory.

4. **The inspection team had some confidence in the reliability of the self-assessment process.** The self-assessment process now involves the staff who deliver the training. Together with managers they have the chance to comment on drafts of the report before it is finalised. The self-assessment report identifies many of the strengths and weaknesses found by inspectors. The grades proposed in the report matched those given by inspectors.

5. **The provider has demonstrated that it has sufficient capacity to make improvements.** The quality of training has been maintained since the 2006 inspection. Success rates are

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improving and there are a number of improvements to training. All but two of the weaknesses from the 2006 inspection have been remedied or significant progress made with them.

GRADES

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

Grades awarded at previous inspection

Leadership and management		4
Contributory grades:		
Equality of opportunity		3
Quality improvement		4

Retail and commercial enterprise			3
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade	
Hairdressing		3	
Apprenticeships for young people	358	3	
NVQ training for young people	6	3	

Grades awarded at reinspection

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

Retail and commercial enterprise			3
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade	
Hairdressing		3	
Apprenticeships for young people	302	3	

ABOUT THE REINSPECTION

6. UKTD was previously inspected in June 2006. At that time, its leadership and management and its arrangements for quality improvement were judged inadequate. Equality of opportunity and training in retail and commercial enterprise were satisfactory. For the reinspection, a team of three inspectors visited UKTD twice over a total of 16 days during January and February 2007. They inspected leadership and management, and equality of opportunity and quality improvement, as well as the contributory area of hairdressing.

Number of inspectors	3
Number of inspection days	16
Number of learners interviewed	32
Number of staff interviewed	20
Number of employers interviewed	13
Number of locations/sites/learning centres visited	17
Number of visits	2

Leadership and management

Strengths

- good management of work-based learning
- comprehensive and well-managed internal verification system
- good support for staff

Weaknesses

- insufficient positive action to recruit learners from under-represented groups
- unsystematic collection and use of feedback on training

Retail and commercial enterprise

Hairdressing

Strengths

- good use of technology in supporting learning and assessment
- good development of key skills
- particularly effective internal verification system
- very effective monitoring of learners' progress
- good development of learners' understanding of equal opportunities

Weaknesses

- poor success rates for advanced apprenticeships
- poor use of target-setting
- some inaccurate information given to learners

DETAILED REINSPECTION FINDINGS

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Grade 3

Strengths

- good management of work-based learning
- comprehensive and well-managed internal verification system
- good support for staff

Weaknesses

- insufficient positive action to recruit learners from under-represented groups
- unsystematic collection and use of feedback on training

7. The management of training has improved significantly since the previous inspection and is now a strength. There has been a significant change in emphasis towards meeting the needs and improving the experiences of the learners. The caseload of learners for each training consultant has been reduced considerably and most learners receive longer visits to their salons at least every three weeks. Training consultants work more flexibly, visiting salons in early evenings or carrying out two shorter visits rather than one longer one, if that is best for the learner. Employer packs have improved, and contain guidance about employers' roles in delivering training, as well as other useful information. All employers reported that communications had improved since the previous inspection.

8. Employers feel that they are actively involved in the training of their learners and that they are receiving a better service from UKTD's training consultants. Salons that had previously had problems with changes of training consultants felt that these had now been resolved. The introduction and use of laptop computers for training and assessment in salons is being managed well. There are 14 training consultants for hairdressing who are line managed by a field manager. Much-improved data is being collected about the individual progress of learners, and this is closely monitored by the field manager.

9. Performance reviews are held each month with individual training consultants, to monitor their learners' progress, any risk of learners leaving before completing their programmes, and the likelihood of timely achievement. A simple traffic light system is used, with amber indicating a need for extra support, and red for more serious concerns. Every learner is listed on a board in the field manager's office, under the month during which they expect to complete their programme. The board also indicates timely achievement. Training consultants have a detailed understanding of their learners' progress, which they did not have at the previous inspection. They take a pride in returning learners to 'green' status when concerns have been raised about progress. Seventy-six per cent of learners are in the green, 'making good progress' category. The field manager has a detailed understanding of the performance of each training consultant in terms of achievers and leavers.

10. Success rates for apprentices have improved and equalled national averages in 2005-06. The timely achievement of the level 2 national vocational qualification (NVQ) as part of the framework has improved by two months for leavers so far in 2006-07,

compared with the previous year. A revised 'Pathway' scheme of work has been developed for the hairdressing programmes and is shared with employers, helping to plan their input into training. Over the next few months, employers are to be risk-banded according to their commitment to training, and awarded gold, silver or bronze standards. Employers' interest in this scheme has already helped to increase the take-up of assessor training.

11. Support for staff is good. There has been a positive change in managers and the management structure since the previous inspection, and staff feel more involved in the management of the company. There is a general feeling among staff of being better supported in their job roles, and their caseload of learners has been reduced. Staff feel that managers have more trust in them, and they are happy to work flexible hours for the benefit of learners. They have more autonomy to make decisions about training and the new team approach was mentioned by everyone interviewed. Staff are excited by the training opportunities being planned for them in the very near future, with training consultants having the chance to take a nationally recognised teaching certificate on UKTD premises. No staff have left since these changes and two staff have returned to UKTD. Very effective induction procedures support new staff in their job roles, and include mentoring and job shadowing. Appraisal systems are appropriate.

12. UKTD has effective internal communications that have improved since the previous inspection. There is a well-defined meetings structure at the head office, and meetings are minuted, with actions and responsible persons identified. Actions do not always show agreed target dates for completion. There is now much better communication with training consultants in the field, with good use of mobile telephones and e-mail. The managing director briefs managers quickly after key meetings, such as when funding has been discussed at external meetings.

13. The use of data, which was previously a weakness, is now satisfactory. The collection and use of data is better, and the provider finds it easier to supply inspectors with information about current learners. In meetings, data is being used to reflect performance over time. Staff are beginning to see how they can use data effectively, looking at numbers of learners as well as percentages in areas such as key skills tests. Forward projections are being made about performance. New measures for success data is being used routinely, and there is increased emphasis on learners achieving frameworks in a timely manner. Some developments are recent, and although they have not had a chance to affect learners they have been well thought out to provide managers with comparative information at quarterly meetings. The performances of individual training consultants are monitored and followed through. Reasons for learners leaving are checked to ensure that there are no problems that need supporting. UKTD has invested in software and training in order to be able to produce its own accounts, and the managing director maintains a good control of budgets and forward strategic projections.

14. Monitoring of employers is satisfactory. UKTD has contracts with employers and carries out effective monitoring through the operations manager and the training consultants' visits. Salons are checked for health and safety and equality of opportunity. Contingency plans have been established to cover the absence of a member of staff who specialises in health and safety.

15. UKTD has improved its strategic management of additional support for learners'

literacy, numeracy and language needs, and this is now satisfactory. A co-ordinator and six skills for life training consultants provide good literacy and language support for learners identified as having low to moderate additional learning needs. This is managed across geographical regions, and there is improved communication with the training consultants to focus support better and prevent duplication of reviews so that more time can be devoted to support. Over 13 per cent of learners currently have additional learning needs. The skills for life team recently had a training day on supporting learners with dyslexia. Several other training events are planned. Staff have been allocated roles that make the best of their specialisms, and a recent recruit to the team will be leading on additional learning support. It is intended that all specialist staff will gain skills for life qualifications in the next academic year.

16. The initial assessment tool that UKTD uses does not give enough detail about learners' literacy and numeracy levels, making it difficult to plan and check that their needs are met. UKTD is investigating diagnostic tools that break down the literacy and numeracy levels to specifics such as punctuation, spelling, division and fractions, so that support can be targeted better and learners retested to show that their needs have been met. Effective additional support is being given to learners in preparing for key skills and hairdressing assignments and tests. Scribes are used appropriately, and technology such as digital voice recorders is being used where it might benefit learners. Learners with dyslexia are given handouts on coloured paper which some find easier to read.

Equality of opportunity

Contributory grade 3

17. Learners have a well-developed understanding of equality and diversity and can respond well to questions asked during their progress reviews. They enjoy the equality and diversity training which is included in their induction, and are all trained in employment rights and responsibilities by the skills for life training consultants. Employers have specific guidelines in their packs which outline their responsibilities for the recruitment, selection and employment of learners. An equality of opportunity strapline included in the introduction of the employer pack welcomes learners from ethnic minorities, and men. Employers are asked to support this objective when recruiting their staff.

18. Equality and diversity are reinforced during progress reviews. Learners' understanding of equality and diversity is discussed, using a set of standard questions that have been reviewed recently to make them more specific to the workplace. For example, a learner was asked how she would use the backwash with a wheelchair user and was able to explain this. Previously, some questions were too theoretical and did not apply well to situations that learners might encounter. Answers to questions are recorded in the formal progress review documents as part of the ongoing monitoring of equality of opportunity in the workplace. Learners have a good understanding of complaints procedures and who to approach if they encounter problems.

19. UKTD has a satisfactory and comprehensive equal opportunities policy that covers bullying, harassment and current legislation. This has been updated recently. The equality statement is included in the learners', staff's and employers' handbooks. Employers also receive very useful information about how they can contribute to the five objectives of 'Every Child Matters'. UKTD makes it very clear that it will not work with employers who discriminate. The provider's monitoring and reviewing of policies is now included in a systematic quality cycle, something that did not happen at the previous inspection. Staff

receive appropriate equality and diversity training when they join UKTD, and work through an employment rights and responsibilities pack. UKTD regularly updates its information about changes in company law and equality of opportunity legislation. Equality of opportunity is a regular agenda item at meetings and staff are updated about any changes to legislation. New resources produced to support learners are also used for staff. UKTD has recently acquired some new resources for equality of opportunity that can be used with laptop computers in salons. These are being amended to suit hairdressing learners. Equality of opportunity is included in the contract with employers. The salons visited by inspectors, and the UKTD office, were accessible to people with mobility difficulties.

20. UKTD now collects and monitors recruitment data by learners' gender and ethnic background. Since the previous inspection, UKTD has become more aware of the composition of the populations in the five local LSC areas where it provides training. It is setting regional improvement targets to reflect local conditions. Quarterly reporting is now in place. In most cases, the number of learners from ethnic minorities is not representative of the local population. UKTD has made progress in this area and its monitoring of such representation is now satisfactory.

21. UKTD has not taken sufficient positive action to promote and encourage members of under-represented groups to join hairdressing programmes. This was also a weakness at the previous inspection. Although improvements have been made in the use and collection of comparative data and in target-setting, these are not supported by strategic recruitment policies and action. There has been slow progress in updating marketing literature and developing strategies to increase representation from under-represented groups. UKTD is exploring offering African-Caribbean hairdressing in West London and is trying to source good-quality representative images with which to update recruitment literature. The first attempts by an external company were rightly rejected as unsuitable. In discussions with inspectors, managers demonstrated some ideas that might help employers recruit more learners from under-represented groups. However, the representation of minority ethnic learners has only improved so far in one of the LSC areas in which UKTD operates. UKTD intends to attend a number of large careers conferences in East London in the next few weeks. The quality improvement plan includes strategies for increasing participation by men and members of ethnic minorities, but these will not be in place until August 2007.

Quality improvement

Contributory grade 3

22. UKTD has a particularly thorough, comprehensive and well-managed internal verification system. This was recognised as a strength at the previous inspection, and the management of the process has since been improved to the benefit of all those involved in training. New assessors are inducted well by a UKTD assessor guide, to give them a full understanding of the paperwork. They complete a series of well-designed exercises in small groups, to ensure standardisation of different assessment techniques including verbal and written questioning, and marking of assignments. This takes place over a full week, and is followed by a week of shadowing experienced assessors. Assessors are classed as probationary until they are able to assess consistently. Internal verifiers continue to act as mentors during this time.

23. The lead internal verifier is supported by five other internal verifiers, and UKTD plans for others to gain appropriate qualifications. Monthly internal verification meetings

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include activities such as standardisation meetings. The in-salon assessors are guided through a similar process, but with an emphasis on practical assessments. They have their own in-salon assessor guide. Assessors value the feedback that they get from internal verifiers, seeing it as constructive and helping to improve their performances. Actions identified are followed through until completion. There is particularly good management of the in-salon assessors, and to remain active they must attend assessor meetings twice each year. A series of meetings is held in different locations including the premises of employers where there are a number of assessors. In-salon assessors are very positive about the value of the meetings.

24. There are thorough sampling plans, and assessors are observed three or four times each year, depending on experience, while different forms of evidence are examined throughout a range of units. Visits to salons are planned carefully to allow time for different sampling before observation of practical assessments. This identifies possible problems and allows time to discuss any concerns while supporting assessors. Records for each learner show the sampling activities that have taken place. Care is taken to ensure that all areas are sampled. Learners due to finish within a six-month period are targeted to ensure that there are no problems with final internal verification. Thorough records are also kept for each assessor so that sampling can be planned and checked. Good, continuous professional development is a key part of the process, including improving product knowledge, attending courses on hair extensions and Indian head massage, and using a creative stylist for cutting demonstrations.

25. Since the previous inspection, UKTD has introduced and revised a range of quality improvement procedures to make them more systematic. An external consultant continues to work with UKTD on this area. Not everything is fully established, but good progress has been made in developing an observation system that covers UKTD training consultants and employer training. Some of the good practice in planning internal verification has been used systematically to plan a schedule of observations. These were beginning to take place at the time of reinspection. Although it is too early to judge their effectiveness, they have been planned so that necessary corrective actions are followed up with further observations, in much the same way as internal verification. Sampling of key training paperwork such as review forms has been established to help consistency, and feedback is given to staff to improve the completion of paperwork. Employers feel that the review process has improved since the previous inspection. The quality of training is also being considered and new resources have been introduced to help ensure consistent delivery. Staff are leading on different aspects of implementation and reviewing the effectiveness of the new materials. Learners feel that the essential knowledge aspect of their training has improved.

26. The self-assessment process is now satisfactory. Although the self-assessment report largely reflects the findings of the previous inspection, staff have felt properly consulted for the first time and there is a sense of ownership of the process. Focus groups have been used to gain staff's views about a number of quality issues. Most of the strengths and weaknesses in the provision were identified through self-assessment, although sometimes with different wording and emphasis. UKTD was critical and managers arrived at their grading decisions in a considered way that reflected the evidence. The quality improvement plan is monitored well at monthly intervals by the management team, using colour to show what actions have been completed and updated. The self-assessment grades for all aspects of UKTD provision matched those given by inspectors.

27. The collection and use of feedback on training is unsystematic. Although new questionnaires have been designed for employers and learners, and some have been used with a few respondents, UKTD has insufficient information to analyse and on which to base meaningful findings. Information is collected by managers talking to employers and learners, but this is not carried out systematically or comparatively. UKTD recognises its slow progress in this area and intends to collect information from employers and learners during annual reviews of salons.

AREAS OF LEARNING

Retail and commercial enterprise

Grade 3

Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Hairdressing		3
Apprenticeships for young people	302	3

28. UKTD currently has 302 hairdressing learners, all of whom are employed. Of these, 258 are apprentices and 44 are advanced apprentices. More than 9 per cent of the learners are men. UKTD works with 150 salons, in which there are 46 work-based assessors. All assessment and training takes place in the salons, and it is subject to UKTD's structured 'Pathway' scheme of work. UKTD's training consultants visit learners to train them in hairdressing and key skills. Where there are no work-based assessors, UKTD also carries out the salon assessments. UKTD has 14 training consultants who work directly with hairdressing learners in the workplace, usually on a three-weekly cycle of visits. Forty learners have been identified as having additional learning support needs. Seven further specialist staff provide key skills training and additional support, including testing of background knowledge for the NVQ. They also provide specific additional support for learners with literacy, numeracy and language needs.

Hairdressing

Strengths

- good use of technology in supporting learning and assessment
- good development of key skills
- particularly effective internal verification system
- very effective monitoring of learners' progress
- good development of learners' understanding of equal opportunities

Weaknesses

- poor success rates for advanced apprenticeships
- poor use of target-setting
- some inaccurate information given to learners

Achievement and standards

29. Apprentice success rates are now satisfactory. In 2004-05, the success rate for apprentices was 32 per cent, and in 2005-06 it reached 51 per cent. This is 1 per cent below the national rate. Learners' practical skills are at least satisfactory, and some learners demonstrate good colouring and cutting skills. Most current learners are on schedule to complete their frameworks within 24 months.

30. Success rates for advanced apprentices are poor. In 2004-05, the success rate reached 29 per cent, and in 2005-06 it rose to 36 per cent which is still poor, although it is

the national average. Recent historic success rates for NVQs are also poor, but UKTD no longer offers NVQ-only programmes.

The quality of provision

31. There is good use of information technology (IT) in supporting learning and assessment. UKTD has recently introduced an IT-based essential knowledge software package. Training consultants bring laptop computers into the salons and deliver essential knowledge individually to the learners. Learners who have experienced this mode of delivery say that it makes the learning of essential knowledge more enjoyable. Learners also have the opportunity to continue this training at home through the internet, and a handbook is being purchased for learners to keep in the salon or at home. In the better sessions, training consultants applied the knowledge demonstrated on screen to the salon that they were training in. When talking about cutting techniques or products used for colouring they referred to the products or techniques used in that salon. Some salons are a little noisy and this affects learning. UKTD is purchasing double headphones to counteract this problem. Laptop computers are also used to assess key skills, and all staff have been trained to assess background knowledge in hairdressing through global online testing that is being introduced shortly.

32. There is good development of learners' key skills. Additional resources have been provided to support key skills training, including specialist staff and laptop computers. Key skills assignments are relevant to hairdressing, and are integrated effectively to make good use of the evidence available in the salons. Many learners complete the key skills component of their frameworks earlier than planned. Learners who have started since the previous inspection, are targeted to gain key skills qualifications in the first year of training, and around 40 per cent have already done so. Learners have a good understanding of why they need key skills, and they enjoy this part of their framework. Some advanced apprentices find application of number at level 2 difficult, but pass rates are improving.

33. UKTD has implemented a comprehensive and particularly effective system for monitoring learners' progress. The field manager updates each learner's records once a month when she meets the training consultants. This system has been in place since August 2006 and is already having a positive effect on the learners' progress, identifying those falling behind so that they can be given extra support. A simple traffic light system allows training consultants to know which of their learners is on target and who is falling behind. Consultants could identify the progress of their learners very easily to inspectors, which was not the case at the previous inspection.

34. Standards of teaching and learning are satisfactory. All learners receive weekly practical training in their salons, and a good range of models is available. Training consultants provide effective coaching and background knowledge support to learners. The better sessions observed drew on the work that learners were doing in their salons. Some salons also provide background knowledge. In some salons, learners have opportunities to attend a range of additional training courses with product manufacturers. Learners value the individual training that they receive from their salon trainers and UKTD's training consultants. Many learners train in very good-quality salons, and have access to professional product ranges and electronic reception packages. They demonstrate satisfactory communication skills when dealing with clients, and an awareness of relevant health and safety procedures, such as gowning clients and sterilising tools. Learners greet clients and make them comfortable in the salon. In one salon

learners have the opportunity to work closely with a well-known stylist, and many salons have good role models for learners to aspire to. Learners are integrated well with the running of the salons, and gain valuable experience from working in a busy commercial environment with a wide variety of clients.

35. Learners' formal progress reviews are satisfactory. Training consultants develop good relationships with learners and their employers. The employers are involved in the progress review process and receive a copy of each review document, which they use to plan learners' in-salon training. Reviews are held at least every 12 weeks, and every six weeks for learners with additional learning needs. Progress reviews include action-planning to meet the targets in the structured 'Pathway' scheme of work. Learners' and employers' awareness of progress is also reinforced by an assessment monitoring system in learners' portfolios. Health and safety and equal opportunities are monitored and reinforced by reviewers' questioning of learners.

36. Initial advice and guidance is satisfactory. Learners know about opportunities in the hairdressing industry and are aware that they can progress to advanced apprenticeships. Some salons are very supportive of their learners' progression to higher qualifications. Support for learners with literacy and numeracy problems is satisfactory, and is provided by skills for life consultants in the salons.

37. Target-setting for learners is poor. UKTD does not systematically apply specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time-related targets. Targets on learners' action plans are often too broad and do not identify specific range statements that need to be completed by the learner. Some short-term targets are set repeatedly over a number of months without being achieved. There is some slow progress with unit achievement, and target-setting does not focus on the completion of units. Some learners who have been on programme for over a year have only completed one unit of their qualification, although they have been successfully assessed for several units. UKTD is aware of this and is beginning to break down targets for learners and leave copies on salon staffroom noticeboards to be shared with salon trainers.

38. Some of the information given to learners is inaccurate. During background knowledge sessions, training consultants gave learners inaccurate information on a few occasions in answer to questions. On one occasion, a training consultant said the pH scale went from one to seven rather than zero to seven. This wrong information had been found in a textbook. In another session, incorrect information was given about trade bodies in hairdressing.

Leadership and management

39. The internal verification process at UKTD is particularly effective. Internal verifiers observe assessors regularly. Assessors who are new to UKTD are observed more frequently in their first three months of employment, and complete an induction process that includes being mentored by an internal verifier to ensure consistency. Training consultants have monthly internal verification meetings with the lead internal verifier. Internal verification systems are very effective in identifying good and poor assessment practice. New assessors, and experienced assessors who are identified as needing support, have more of their work sampled more frequently. Identified issues are monitored closely until they are resolved. Standardisation meetings are particularly well-attended by salon-based assessors. Internal verification records demonstrate that

when issues are identified, staff act quickly to resolve inconsistencies with assessment practice.

40. Learners have a well-developed understanding of equal opportunities. Equality and diversity are reinforced sufficiently at progress reviews, where learners' understanding of equality and diversity is discussed and checked through questioning. Learners interviewed all had a good recollection of their induction, and spoke with confidence about equality and diversity issues.

41. Managers monitor the completion of training paperwork, including progress review records, satisfactorily. Appropriate action is taken to resolve matters of slow progress or incomplete procedural paperwork. Thorough audits of learners' files check the effectiveness of quality assurance procedures. UKTD has introduced a system of risk-assessing learners' progress towards achievement of the qualification. This ensures early identification of the risk of non-achievement, and allows UKTD to put additional measures in place to bring learners back on target.

42. The self-assessment report produced in December 2006 reflects inspectors' findings more than the report presented at the previous inspection. The current self-assessment report largely reflects the reinspection findings fairly and staff were involved more closely in its preparation.

43. UKTD has made satisfactory progress since the previous inspection. There have been significant improvements in the management of learners' progress. The 'traffic light' system allows training consultants and managers to be fully aware of each learners' progress towards achievement. There is also better support for learners. The number of visits to salons by training consultants has increased, as has their duration, ensuring that there is more time to develop learners' knowledge and more assessment opportunities.

44. Since the previous inspection, employers' involvement in training has improved. All employers questioned by inspectors stated that the service they were getting from UKTD had improved. One employer said that UKTD had restored its faith in the apprenticeship programme, and those interviewed said that they would recommend UKTD to fellow salon owners.

45. During inspection, training consultants spoke positively about the changes there have been in communication, management structure and practices since the previous inspection. They state that there is an increased understanding of their role, and improved communications by management. Training consultants are now able to work flexible hours and have smaller caseloads of learners. They are able to respond more quickly to the needs of learners and employers and are finding their own jobs more rewarding. No staff have left UKTD since the previous inspection, and this has helped bring stability to the training and assessment programme.

