

MONITORING VISIT: MAIN FINDINGS

Name of Provider: E.Quality Training Limited
Date of visit: 10 June 2008

Context

At the inspection in June 2005, the provider's leadership and management and quality improvement were both judged to be inadequate. Equality of opportunity was judged to be satisfactory while Entry to Employment (E2E) provision was found to be inadequate. Reinspection took place over three visits. One inspector attended for a day in January 2006 and a further day in May 2006. Two inspectors then attended for three days in July 2006. The first two visits concentrated on evaluating the effectiveness of E.Quality's post-inspection action plan in rectifying the weaknesses and consolidating the strengths found at the previous inspection. The final visit reinspected all aspects of E.Quality's leadership and management and the E2E training programme. At reinspection all aspects of the provision were judged to be satisfactory.

Achievement and standards

What progress has been made to maintain the strongly improving trends in rates of retention, achievement and progression?	Significant progress
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E.Quality has made significant progress in maintaining the strongly improving trends in rates of retention, achievement and progression noted at the previous inspection. In 2005/06, 89% of learners who started the programme were retained. This rose to 94% in 2006/07 and is at a similarly high level for the current year. E.Quality has identified the reasons why learners leave early. These are almost exclusively due to personal issues. For example, a significant proportion of learners do not complete their programme due to pregnancy. Staff now monitor data more effectively to identify learners who are making slow progress. Achievement rates have improved dramatically. In 2004/05, no learners achieved their programme aims. Following the previous inspection in 2005/06 the proportion of learners achieving a Level 1 qualification more than doubled to 68% in 2006/07. In the current year, the proportion is high at 82%. The rate of learners progressing into employment, further education or accredited training shows a consistently improving trend. In 2006/07, approximately half of all learners progressed onto one of these outcomes. Data for

the current year shows a continuation of this improving trend. However, recruitment of learners has steadily declined over the last four years.

The quality of provision

How much progress has been made in improving the weak target-setting experienced by learners?	Reasonable progress
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The provider has made reasonable progress in improving the weak target-setting experienced by learners at the previous inspection. Staff have undertaken relevant training to improve their skills in writing targets that are specific and measurable. In addition, staff have evaluated each others' recorded target-setting as part of a self- and peer assessment process. A member of staff has attended training specifically applicable to E2E programmes and used the experience to facilitate the improvement of practice across the organisation. All learners have a review of their progress every four weeks. Tutors effectively link targets set in reviews and planned individual learning activities to learners' personal objectives. Most targets now include details of the benefits that agreed actions will bring to learners. In a small number of cases, the quality of a tutor's handwriting used to record targets is difficult to read.

What progress has been made to maintain and improve learners' access to an appropriate range of learning options?	Reasonable progress
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E.Quality has made reasonable progress in maintaining and improving learners' access to an appropriate range of learning options. Since the previous inspection, E.Quality has introduced training in hairdressing at Level 1 and childcare at Level 2. E.Quality also provides an accredited employment skills qualification for learners that helps them clarify potential career options and develop their job-seeking skills. An appropriate range of vocational area taster days are available that are well matched to individual learners' abilities and future goals. Effective use is made of links with local employers to provide work-placements.

Leadership and management

What progress has been made to improve the evaluation of quality improvement activities?	Reasonable progress
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The provider has made reasonable progress to improve the evaluation of quality improvement activities. E.Quality has regular monthly meetings that all staff attend which are now more structured, have set agendas and provide a clear quality improvement focus for all programmes and the opportunity to share good practice. At these meetings staff regularly discuss learner progression. Internal communication through regular informal discussions between staff is good. The provider has identified and recorded a set of comprehensive quality improvement actions. All

actions have identified targets, dates for completion and responsibilities for identified actions. The provider effectively monitors and evaluates progress in achieving quality improvement targets. E.Quality appropriately uses the quality improvement action plan to produce its annual self-assessment report.

How much progress has been made in improving access facilities for learners with restricted mobility?	Significant progress
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E.Quality has made significant progress in improving access facilities for learners with restricted mobility at the Newcastle centre which was previously problematic. A private car park provides easy access to the building and entry is via a set of double doors and a removable access ramp. The provider has widened several internal doors to provide access to a classroom on the ground floor. E.Quality has recently constructed toilets that are accessible to individuals with mobility difficulties and are awaiting building approval. Learners with restricted mobility also have some access to computers and the Internet on the ground floor. Computers facilities also include the availability of laptops and wireless connectivity throughout the building. Staff identify learners with restricted mobility at other E.Quality buildings and refer them to the Newcastle training centre.

Self-assessment and improvement planning

What progress has been made to ensure the self-assessment process and development plan drives forward improvements?	Reasonable progress
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Reasonable progress has been made to ensure the self-assessment process and development plan drives forward improvements. All staff have a further opportunity to input to the self-assessment report at an annual self-assessment development day. Learners are encouraged to provide feedback at various stages throughout their programmes through a well designed questionnaire. There are regular opportunities for learners to provide informal feedback during their progress reviews. E.Quality has recently employed the services of an external questionnaire data processing organisation that has provided useful independent feedback from learners and other stakeholders. E.Quality produces annual development plans that identify wider organisation targets as well as learner attainment and progression targets. The provider uses development plans to identify strategic changes, such as the widening of the curriculum, and the need to make changes to the accommodation to ensure learner access.