

Capita Group Plc

Inspection date

25 July 2008

Inspection number

321162

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Background information

Inspection judgements

Inspectors use a four-point scale to summarise their judgements about achievement and standards, the quality of provision, and leadership and management, which includes a grade for equality of opportunity.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Further information can be found on how inspection judgements are made on www.ofsted.gov.uk.

Scope of the inspection

In deciding the scope of the inspection, inspectors take account of the provider's most recent self-assessment report and development plans, and comments from the local Learning and Skills Council (LSC) or other funding body. Where appropriate, inspectors also consider the previous inspection report (www.ofsted.gov.uk), reports from the inspectorates' quality monitoring or annual assessment visits, and data on learners and their achievements over the period since the previous inspection.

In addition to reporting on overall effectiveness of the organisation, its capacity to improve further, achievement and standards, quality of provision and leadership and management, this inspection focused on specialist provision in:

- Business, administration and law

Description of the provider

1. The Capita Group Plc (Capita) employs over 30,000 employees at more than 250 offices across the United Kingdom, Channel Islands, Eire and India. Capita services include the provision of business process outsourcing, customer services, administration and support, human resource management, information and communication technology (ICT), property consultancy, finance, treasury and consultancy to both public and private sector organisations.
2. In October 2006, Capita secured a National Employer Service (NES) contract for publicly funded work-based learning that funds all its accredited training. The contract management team is based in Birmingham and is the responsibility of the client services director. A vocational learning manager has overall responsibility for learning programmes and manages a team consisting of an assessment team co-ordinator, a part-time and full-time internal verifier and 12 assessors. Six of the assessors are also qualified internal verifiers. An NES administration team leader provides administration and data support.
3. Currently 472 learners are on programme, of which 96 are working towards a business administration apprenticeship and 19 an advanced apprenticeship. In addition, there are 199 apprentices and 70 advanced apprentices in customer service and 38 learners following an apprenticeship programme in team leading and 36 advanced apprentices in management.
4. Of the six Train to Gain learners, one is working towards a qualification in business administration at Level 2, three a customer service programme at Level 2 and two a management qualification at Level 3. Capita currently has eight learners following skills for life programmes in literacy or numeracy. All learners are permanent employees of The Capita Group Plc.

Summary of grades awarded

Effectiveness of provision	Good: Grade 2
Capacity to improve	Good: Grade 2
Achievement and standards	Good: Grade 2
Quality of provision	Good: Grade 2
Leadership and management	Good: Grade 2
Equality of opportunity	Contributory grade: Satisfactory: Grade 3

Sector subject area

Business, administration and law	Good: Grade 2
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Overall judgement

Effectiveness of provision

Good: Grade 2

5. The overall effectiveness of provision is good. Achievement and standards and the quality of provision are good. Leadership and management are good. Equality of opportunity arrangements is satisfactory. The provision in business, administration and law is good.

Capacity to improve

Good: Grade 2

6. Capita has a good capacity to improve. It has a clear and strong commitment to improve the quality of provision by use of its good quality improvement arrangements. The focus on continuous improvement at operational level is good. Managers use data well to inform decisions and plan improvements. Capita uses a well structured quality improvement framework as part of an effective strategy of review for improvement. The provider uses audits to effectively identify and put into place activities for improvement. Internal verification is thorough and contributes effectively to quality improvement. Within company sections unrelated to the training function, Capita has been able to draw on a good range of expertise to support developments. Observations of on-the-job training and assessment activities are very effective in improving the quality of delivery. However, Capita has only recently introduced effective quality assurance of all off-the-job training sessions.
7. The self-assessment process is good. The report includes a good range of relevant data to support judgements. Managers and staff are fully involved in the compilation of the self-assessment report. The views of learners and employers contribute effectively to the process. Judgements in the report are accurate and correspond closely to those made by inspectors. The report is very evaluative and links clearly and effectively to the quality improvement plan. Staff regard self-assessment as an important tool for improving the quality of provision and are actively involved in monitoring and implementing actions for improvement.

Key strengths

- High success rates in the current year
- Good development of personal and vocational skills
- Good training in the workplace
- Good responsiveness to employer and learner needs
- Good assessment practices
- Particularly effective communications
- Good quality improvement arrangements
- Very good staff induction

Key areas for improvement

- Insufficient planning of individualised learning

Main findings

Achievement and standards

Good: Grade 2

8. Achievements and standards overall are good. Success rates on Train to Gain programmes in the current year are very good. They significantly exceed national rates, and have risen from 68% in 2006/07 to 91% in 2007/08, with no learners still in learning. Success rates for skills for life are good, with 88% of learners so far achieving in 2007/08. Completion of apprenticeship and advanced apprenticeship frameworks for the first 11 months of 2007/08 has already reached 71% with few learners yet to complete. Most learners pass technical certificates and key skills tests at the first attempt. Different groups of learners achieve at the same rate.
9. Learners develop good personal and vocational skills. They quickly become confident at communicating with customers and colleagues, are more organised and have a high awareness of the need for safety and security. While many job roles are challenging, learners effectively develop appropriate skills to take on greater responsibilities. The standard of learners' work is at least good. Learners enjoy their programmes, which they find challenging and interesting.
10. Progression rates to further training programmes and employment are good for apprentices and satisfactory for Train to Gain learners. All learners are employed by Capita and often use their new skills and knowledge to gain promotion during or at the end of their programme.

Quality of provision

Good: Grade 2

11. Training, coaching and learning are good. Good workplace training is effective in meeting the needs of learners' job roles. Employers provide learners with very good ongoing training for products and software, changes in learners' work roles or teams. Learners effectively re-visit company policies and procedures during their training programmes to improve workplace performance. Training rooms are well equipped. Learners have access to a wide range of good quality learning materials, much of which Capita has developed in-house and shared between training sites. Good use is made of online learning material. An experienced and qualified training manager works from each site. Off-the-job coaching is good. Induction training is satisfactory.
12. Assessment practice is good. Assessors are based at learners' workplaces and are readily accessible for assessment and coaching sessions. All assessors understand the needs of the business well and are very familiar with the job roles of the learners. They discuss assessment and training opportunities regularly with learners and their supervisors. Learners can access assessment at short notice to fit in with work schedules. Assessors routinely accredit training in the workplace to fulfil knowledge criteria of the NVQ. Assessors effectively use digital voice recording to record guided discussions, witness testimonies from supervisors, direct observations, and question and answer sessions. Internal verification is effective. Capita make good use of feedback and staff development with assessors, after observations or portfolio sampling, to improve standards. However, there is insufficient account taken of individual learner needs when initially planning learning. Capita does not always effectively use individual learning plans to support the planning of individual programmes. Previously completed workplace training is not systematically recorded. Assessors do not routinely set challenging targets for individual NVQ unit and qualification achievement to reflect individual abilities and experience. The

timescale for achievement is generally the same for all learners. Some learners make slower progress than expected. However, short-term target-setting during progress reviews is good.

13. Programmes meet the needs of employers and learners well. Capita's responsiveness to employer and learner needs is good. Each training site has a training manager who takes responsibility for the planning and co-ordination of the programmes and works very effectively with the assessor. Line managers are effectively involved in the programmes and actively participate in progress reviews. Employers provide good support for learners. Celebration of learners' success is good. Learners work towards appropriate qualifications and levels for their job roles. Recruitment practices are fair and inclusive.
14. Support, advice and guidance are satisfactory. Diagnostic assessment is accurate in identifying a learner's individual additional learning needs. Frequent coaching of learners by assessors effectively improves numeracy and literacy skills. Assessors make good use of specialist workbooks and on-line materials. Arrangements for information, advice and guidance are satisfactory at all stages of the learners' programme.

Leadership and management

Good: Grade 2

Equality of opportunity

Contributory grade: Satisfactory: Grade 3

15. Leadership and management are good. The vocational learning manager and operational management support staff well and set a clear and effective direction for the business. The focus on continuous improvement at operational level is good. Capita has a well structured quality improvement framework that it effectively uses to review key processes for improvement. The quality improvement plan is detailed, action orientated and used well to drive forward improvements. Capita is making very good progress in carrying out actions identified in the plan to increase success rates. The self-assessment process and report are accurate and critically evaluative. Observations of on-the-job training and assessment activities are very effective in improving the quality of delivery. However,

some key off-the-job training sessions have only recently been subject to quality assurance arrangements by observation.

16. Communications are particularly effective. Capita identified this strength in its self-assessment report. Managers use data well to inform decisions and plan improvements. Staff work across a wide geographical area but are effectively updated on company developments. For example, Capita produces informative monthly reports for site managers and assessors evaluating learners' progress including overall and timely success rates. The provider uses these monthly updates effectively to measure assessor performance and help learners achieve. In addition, the vocational learning manager makes very good use of weekly conference calls to monitor learner progress and implement actions for improvement. Capita effectively uses regular and informative standardisation meetings to share best practice. The provider analyses a good range of data and produces particularly useful reports to aid action planning and decision making. Capita effectively use data for target-setting. However, the learner success rate target is for the whole provision and does not differentiate between learning areas, Train to Gain, apprentices and advanced apprentices.
17. Capita responds well to employer and learner needs. Every employer has a permanent on-site assessor who has a good understanding of its culture and working practices. Working relations between employers and staff are very productive. External links are used effectively to share and develop high standards of practice. A number of established and effective practices are used well to monitor and improve the quality of provision. The collection, analysis and use of employer and learner feedback is good.
18. Staff are well qualified and experienced to deliver vocational training to learners. Capita has well developed procedures for the recruitment and selection of staff. All staff understand their roles well. Staff training and development is effective and appropriately linked to the quality development plan.
19. Staff have a very good introduction to Capita and their role within it. This strength was identified in its self-assessment report. They are given particularly effective mentored support and personal training from the Assessment Team Co-ordinator and experienced colleagues. New staff also complete a very detailed interactive online induction that covers all aspects of the provider's policies and procedures. The additional site-specific induction enables new staff to work effectively with individual site's priorities and practices. The learning accommodation is of a good standard. Capita makes effective use of learning resources to support learners.
20. Equality of opportunity is satisfactory and reflects the judgement made in the self-assessment report. Capita annually updates equality and diversity policies and procedures to reflect current changes in legislation, including those related to disability and race relations. Policies and procedures effectively focus on protecting learners while participating in training within the workplace. Capita appropriately promotes equality of opportunity during company and training programme induction, as well as within learning programmes. However, the process used during progress reviews, to reinforce learners understanding of work related equality and diversity issues, is not consistently effective. All learners have an adequate or better awareness and understanding of their rights and responsibilities. Assessors and learners work within a mutually respectful culture that effectively supports all learners to succeed. Staff training and development in equality and

diversity are satisfactory. Capita make good use of data analysis for equal opportunities purposes. For example monitoring of recruitment and success rate data for different groups has resulted in a clear emphasis on improving the proportion of male learners recruited and completing their programme. The provider effectively uses a detailed action plan to monitor progress in achieving improvements in equality and diversity. However, the plan lacks detail to allow for identification and evaluation of the effectiveness of identified actions. At one of Capita's sites, the identification of good practice in equality and diversity has not been fully shared across all of the provision.

21. The quality of information, advice and guidance is satisfactory. The provider has adequate initial assessment procedures and processes to identify additional learning support, including literacy, language and numeracy. Capita provide good resources to support learners' skills for life. The procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements. Capita has an appropriate child and vulnerable adult protection policy, however, Capita has yet to complete criminal record vetting for all staff.

What learners like:

- The availability of assessors – ‘It’s great to have an assessor on site, who is always there and fits in with my work schedules’
- The opportunity to learn – ‘It’s never too late to learn. I’m 58 and have nearly completed my apprenticeship in business administration. It’s my first ever qualification’
- The potential for personal improvement – ‘It gives you confidence, when you realise how well the NVQ fits in with the job’
- The support – ‘You get lots of help with literacy and numeracy’
- Increased variety of work activities – ‘My job role has expanded because of my training’
- The chance to gain a qualification – ‘I can gain a qualification from the work I do every day’
- Improvement in work performance – ‘It has made me a better manager’
- The staff – ‘The assessor is enthusiastic and very approachable’
- Use of ICT during training – ‘I like the access I have to the e-NVQ’

What learners think could improve:

- The range of NVQs offered
- The frequent change of assessors in the past
- The opportunity to achieve faster

Annex

Learners' achievements

Success rates on **work-based learning 'apprenticeship' programmes** managed by the Capita Group plc **2006 to 2007**

Programme	End Year	Success rate	No. of learners*	Provider NVQ rate**	National NVQ rate**	Provider framework rate**	National framework rate**
Advanced apprenticeships	06-07	overall					
		timely	1	0	43	0	37
Apprenticeships	06-07	overall					
		timely	2	0	47	0	44

* Learners who leave later than originally planned are counted in the year they actually leave. This group of learners are then added to the learners who planned to complete in a given year and did so or left earlier than planned

** Provider and national qualification success rates are calculated using LSC published data derived from the 'Individual Learning Record'

Success rates on **work-based learning 'Train to Gain' programmes** managed by the Capita Group plc **2006 to 2008**

Programme	End Year	Success rate	No. of learners*	Provider NVQ rate**
Train to Gain ***	2006/07	overall	83	49
		timely	41	49
	2007/08 (11 months)	overall	175	91
		timely	159	86

Note: 2007/08 data is 'part year' only and is representative of the first 3 months or greater of the LSC contract year

* Learners who leave later than originally planned are counted in the year they actually leave. This group of learners are then added to the learners who planned to complete in a given year and did so or left earlier than planned

** Provider qualification success rates are calculated using LSC published data derived from the 'Individual Learning Record'

*** Includes 'Train to Gain' long course NVQ provision, but not 'skills for life'