

INSPECTION REPORT

Retail Motor Industry Training Limited

09 September 2002



ADULT LEARNING
INSPECTORATE

Grading

Inspectors use a seven-point scale to summarise their judgements about the quality of learning sessions. The descriptors for the seven grades are:

- *grade 1 - excellent*
- *grade 2 - very good*
- *grade 3 - good*
- *grade 4 - satisfactory*
- *grade 5 - unsatisfactory*
- *grade 6 - poor*
- *grade 7 - very poor.*

Inspectors use a five-point scale to summarise their judgements about the quality of provision in occupational/curriculum areas and Jobcentre Plus programmes. The same scale is used to describe the quality of leadership and management, which includes quality assurance and equality of opportunity. The descriptors for the five grades are:

- *grade 1 - outstanding*
- *grade 2 - good*
- *grade 3 - satisfactory*
- *grade 4 - unsatisfactory*
- *grade 5 - very weak.*

The two grading scales relate to each other as follows:

SEVEN-POINT SCALE	FIVE-POINT SCALE
grade 1	grade 1
grade 2	
grade 3	grade 2
grade 4	grade 3
grade 5	grade 4
grade 6	grade 5
grade 7	

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 training within the remit of a single inspectorate. The ALI is responsible for inspecting a wide range of government-funded learning, including:

- work-based training for all people 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.

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 judgement

In those cases where the overall judgement is that the provision is adequate, only those aspects of the provision which are less than satisfactory will be reinspected.

Provision will normally be deemed to be inadequate where:

- more than one third of published grades for occupational/curriculum areas, or
- leadership and management are judged to be less than satisfactory

This provision will be subject to a full reinspection.

The final decision as to whether the provision is inadequate rests with the Chief Inspector of Adult Learning. A statement as to whether the provision is adequate or not is included in the summary section of the inspection report.

SUMMARY

The provider

Retail Motor Industry Training Limited is a private training organisation and a wholly owned subsidiary of the Retail Motor Industry Federation Limited, which has its head office in Rugby. The company provides training for the retail motor industry throughout England and Wales, and also provides training in Scotland, which is outside the scope of the inspection. It manages work-based learning for young people in motor vehicle engineering, retailing, customer service and business administration.

Overall judgement

The quality of the provision is not adequate to meet the reasonable needs of those receiving it. Specifically, leadership and management are unsatisfactory, as are the contributory grades for equal opportunities and quality assurance. The retailing, customer service and business administration training programmes are also unsatisfactory. Training in motor vehicle engineering is satisfactory.

GRADES

Leadership and management	4
Contributory grades:	
Equality of opportunity	4
Quality assurance	4

Engineering, technology & manufacturing	3
Contributory grades:	
Work-based learning for young people	3

Business administration, management & professional	4
Contributory grades:	
Work-based learning for young people	4

Retailing, customer service & transportation	4
Contributory grades:	
Work-based learning for young people	4

KEY STRENGTHS

- good staff teamwork
- good staff training and development
- good development of vocational skills in the motor vehicle training programme
- good training and pastoral support for learners
- good range of learning opportunities at work

KEY WEAKNESSES

- inadequate management information
- weak monitoring of subcontractors
- inconsistent quality of training programmes
- slow progress for a significant number of learners
- insufficient employer understanding of modern apprenticeship frameworks
- poor planning and recording of training
- poor achievement rates

OTHER IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

- clearer operational plans for the introduction of change in the regions
- better liaison between assessors and training co-ordinators
- better reinforcement of induction
- more practical work in off-the-job sessions at ReMIT's training centres

THE INSPECTION

1. Twenty-one inspectors spent a total of 200 days with Retail Motor Industry Training Limited (ReMIT) in September 2002. Inspectors visited 261 work placements, interviewed 430 learners and 199 workplace supervisors, and examined 271 learners' portfolios. They held 170 interviews with ReMIT's staff, reviewed learners' and employers' files, management information, awarding body records, learning materials, policies and procedures, the contract with the Learning and Skills Councils (LSCs) and recent audit reports. The company's most recent self-assessment report was also examined. There were few learning sessions available for observation as college terms were just starting, but inspectors visited 23 colleges and interviewed 54 college staff. Eighteen other training centres were visited and a range of learning materials and resources was inspected.

THE PROVIDER AS A WHOLE

Context

2. ReMIT is wholly owned by the Retail Motor Industry Federation Limited (RMI), which is the trade association representing and servicing businesses concerned with providing motor industry products and services. ReMIT was formed in 1983 and has been involved in government-funded training programmes since then. ReMIT provides work-based learning for 6,209 young people in motor vehicle engineering, business administration, and retailing, customer service and transportation. Modern apprenticeships in motor vehicle engineering are the biggest single group of learners, with 88 per cent in this category.

3. ReMIT's head office is in Rugby and it also has an office in London, together with six regional offices throughout England and Wales. There are 98 full-time management and administrative staff and 149 assessors and training co-ordinators, of whom 88 per cent are self-employed. The company's main funding is from the national contract with the LSC and a smaller contract for learners in Wales. Off-the-job training for motor vehicle modern apprentices is subcontracted to local further education colleges and, in some areas, ReMIT has its own training centres. There has been an increasing trend for large motor vehicle manufacturing companies to determine the training arrangements for modern apprentices in the motor vehicle dealerships. These training programmes often have block-release arrangements with colleges of further education, which sometimes include arrangements for providing training and education in their own training centres. Most retailing and customer service training has off-the-job training included. All business administration modern apprentices are trained on the job and many learners take part in company training programmes.

Work-based learning for young people

4. Learners are all employed in a range of motor vehicle retailing and repair businesses offering suitable work placements and learning opportunities. Achievement rates are satisfactory in the motor vehicle advanced modern apprenticeship programme, which is the largest training programme, with 86 per cent of the motor vehicle learners. In the much smaller motor vehicle foundation modern apprenticeship programme, achievement and retention rates are less than satisfactory. Business administration achievement and retention rates are also less than satisfactory. There are low achievement rates in the retailing programmes. Some learners in all training programmes have been in training for too long. The previous practice of leaving key skills training to the end of training programmes has contributed to the under-achievement of modern apprenticeship frameworks and low retention rates.

5. The overall standard of training for learners in motor vehicle training programmes is satisfactory. Across all training programmes the planning of individual learning plans are poor and insufficient short-term targets are set. Employers are insufficiently involved in the modern apprenticeship frameworks. The standard of training in business administration and retailing programmes is less than satisfactory. Although most learners are well supported, this support is often not focused sufficiently on achievement. Most assessment is carried out satisfactorily in the motor vehicle training programmes. Most of ReMIT's field staff are well qualified and experienced in the motor vehicle trades in which learners are employed. However, learners' progress reviews are carried out inconsistently. In the retailing training programme, some assessment practices are less than satisfactory and training is not well co-ordinated. Although workplace opportunities are good in business administration, progress towards achievement of the national vocational qualifications (NVQs) is slow and few learners are achieving their qualifications.

6. ReMIT is going through a sustained period of change. For example, over the past two years, the number of contracts held has reduced from 47 Training and Enterprise Council contracts to seven local LSC contracts and now one contract for England and two in Wales. This has created the need to change organisational structures and internal systems and procedures. Much of this change is well managed and communications are effective. Staff development is good and internal verification systems are sound. There are good external links and a wide range of equal opportunities initiatives. However, there have been some major difficulties in sustaining effective management information systems during the period of change and the introduction of a major new information technology (IT) system is behind schedule. Managers at all levels set few targets. Quality assurance arrangements are out of date and do not cover all aspects of the training programmes. Subcontractors are not well managed. Some training programmes and staff practices are poor. Equality of opportunity is not promoted sufficiently and poor practices are not challenged.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Grade 4

7. ReMIT is a limited company with a board of three executive members and five non-executive members. The executive members are the managing director, the financial director and the operations director. Two directors are based in the London office. The operations director, who is responsible for daily management activities, is based at the head office in Rugby. There are five national managers based at the head office with specific responsibility for recruitment, equal opportunities, quality assurance, key accounts and training standards. ReMIT is organised into seven regions, with separate regional offices. There are four regional managers who are directly responsible for all the training programmes in their region. The regional managers and operations manager meet each month. Within each region there are two programme managers, one NVQ centre co-ordinator, several administrative staff and a number of field staff. Eighty-eight per cent of the field staff are self-employed and work in a variety of roles for ReMIT. ReMIT has a three-year business plan covering 2000-02. There is a range of policies, including quality assurance, equal opportunities, staff recruitment and training. ReMIT is accredited with the Investors in People standard, which is a national standard for improving an organisation's performance through its people. ReMIT has been producing self-assessment reports since 1998, the most recent being April 2002.

STRENGTHS

- effective management of key training accounts
- good staff teamwork
- good staff training and development
- good links with external organisations
- wide range of equal opportunities initiatives

WEAKNESSES

- insufficient targets for retention and achievement rates
- inadequate management information
- insufficient use of initial assessment
- poor follow-up of equal opportunities initiatives
- inadequate quality assurance arrangements
- weak monitoring of subcontractors
- inconsistent standards in training programmes

OTHER IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

- clearer operational plans for the introduction of change in the regions
- extend the scope of the stakeholder survey to include colleges

8. In the past two years, ReMIT has successfully made significant changes to its organisation in response to business needs. It has moved from a purely regional structure, based on geographical criteria, to one where certain functions are managed at national level. Change has been achieved gradually and careful communication at each stage has generally assisted the process without causing too much disruption. Management roles at head office and within the regions have been re-specified and defined clearly. The accounts of large motor manufacturers are now managed by a dedicated team of staff at the head office in Rugby, known as the key accounts team. Recruitment activities are managed nationally through a team of six recruiters, who are based in the regions to market ReMIT effectively to local employers.

9. There is good teamwork among the new national teams, with regular meetings and communications. The new national arrangements have been communicated clearly to the regional staff through e-mails, memos and a variety of presentations and visits by the national staff. The national and regional managers communicate well through monthly meetings, e-mails and visits. There is good teamwork within most regions. The employed field staff have been issued with laptops to aid communications. All field staff in the regions attend regular meetings and receive frequent updates and information through notes and e-mails. However, not all self-employed staff are clear about some of the new developments and initiatives. Plans for implementing changes in the regions are not always clarified effectively enough to help in the management of training.

10. A national training standards manager was appointed two years ago and there is a co-ordinated approach to staff training and development. There is a national training plan for all staff based on the needs of the business, the annual appraisal system and other information. New employees are given a thorough induction. A good range of training is provided for employees and self-employed staff to update their occupational competencies. Most staff have completed a customer care course. As part of this course, staff proposed areas for continued personal development through the use of learning diaries. These diaries have been analysed and additional activities are identified in the training plan. Some managers are taking part in a national management development programme. A mentoring programme is planned and two female employees from each region have been identified, so that additional support can be given to female learners.

11. There are good links with a wide range of external organisations, both nationally and regionally. ReMIT's managing director is an active member of a number of industry- and training-related groups. ReMIT works in partnership with a multinational car manufacturer and a large voluntary sector youth work charity to provide NVQ training for prisoners at a young offenders' institute. One region works closely with an employer to offer schools an introduction to the motor vehicle industry. In another region, ReMIT works with a local college and community to offer pre-entry training to disadvantaged groups of young people. There are effective relationships with Connexions in most regions.

12. ReMIT recently appointed five contract managers to work with several large

multinational light and heavy motor vehicle manufacturers, as well as large groups of dealers. ReMIT has also employed 12 training programme advisers to manage, assess and support the learners of the three largest key accounts. The advisers for each account meet monthly with the national managers and attend regional meetings. The dedicated advisers are able to ensure the training programmes are carried out to the specifications agreed and to reinforce the employers' own brands and additional training. The employers have provided ReMIT's advisers with additional training to ensure they have a good understanding of their requirements. Off-the-job training is carried out on block release at specific colleges using dedicated training rooms and materials. For many modern apprentices on key account training programmes, the modern apprenticeship is part of a clear career progression route.

13. There have been few targets for the retention and achievement of different groups of learners. The management review of programme performance has been weak. No targets have been set. National, regional or individual staff's performance targets for retention and achievement rates have not been identified. There is no evidence of management review of the performance of the smaller training programmes, retailing and business administration. ReMIT's management control of staff is inadequate. The only measures used to manage self-employed staff's performance are the number of learners starting and contracted staff's hours. This means that managers have very little influence over the standard or pace of training. Information on retention and achievement rates is not used routinely to measure or evaluate the effectiveness of training programmes, or of changes and improvements. There are national and regional targets for the recruitment of new learners, the number of learners on training programmes and the number expected to achieve a qualification. The targets are based on planned business growth and LSC contract requirements.

14. ReMIT has difficulty producing accurate management information. Performance levels are difficult to monitor with the current management information system. Data regarding learners' past performance and current learners' progress and achievement have not been available routinely. There is insufficient analysis of management information to establish trends over time for different programmes, regions, colleges or staff. Management information is not used systematically to identify areas for improvements. There is little use of information to measure and evaluate changes and initiatives. Some of the data are inaccurate. Leavers' data are not analysed sufficiently. Details of applicants are gathered, but these are not analysed systematically or used to target marketing and recruitment activities. There is insufficient analysis of applicants' information to ensure the recruitment process is free from bias.

15. The management policy for initial assessment does not incorporate a formal identification of individual learning needs or additional support requirements. All applicants are required to pass a selection test before being accepted for training, and pass marks vary among employers. Those who fail are referred to full-time college courses. Most colleges carry out basic skills assessments when learners start and a few carry out diagnostic tests for key skills. However, this information is not always shared with ReMIT or the employers. Learners who attend ReMIT centres for off-the-job

training are not given a diagnostic initial assessment to identify individual learning needs. Learners who transfer to ReMIT do not have an assessment of their progress or learning needs. ReMIT has collaborated with a private learning resources company in the development of a web-based initial assessment test for basic skills and key skills, but this has not yet been introduced.

Equality of opportunity

Contributory grade 4

16. ReMIT has an equal opportunities policy, which is issued to learners at induction and to work-placement providers with their contracts. The procedures and responsibilities for dealing with harassment are defined in ReMIT's quality assurance manual, but this is outdated. The procedure for employee complaints is detailed in ReMIT's staff handbook. Most learners are familiar with the complaints procedure and issues are dealt with effectively.

17. Less than 1 per cent of motor vehicle modern apprentices in training with ReMIT are women. The organisation has introduced a wide range of equal opportunities initiatives to rectify this and the similarly low representation of modern apprentices from minority ethnic groups. For example, ReMIT has established a national manager for equal opportunities and a working group with representatives from each region. Targets have been set to increase the number of new female and minority ethnic learners in under-represented areas of learning. However, the targets are national and have not yet been broken down to ReMIT regions or geographical areas. It is too early to judge the impact of the initiatives.

18. There is some promotion of women in the industry by celebrating the success of female motor vehicle modern apprentices in national magazines and local papers. The newly established, predominantly female, team of recruiters has attended a number of careers fairs and events, including some at girls' schools and others organised by minority ethnic associations. ReMIT has worked with a college to promote women in engineering. The promotional material used is designed to increase the recruitment of female modern apprentices into non-traditional roles in the motor industry and increase enrolment from minority ethnic groups and those with disabilities. Letters to parents of potential modern apprentices have previously been produced in 10 community languages. Some Welsh-speaking learners have experienced difficulty with key skills tests carried out in English and ReMIT has not yet provided Welsh language versions.

19. One region has been involved in a national project to develop and trial a course book and CD to support an equal opportunities course aimed at the motor industry. Staff and learners have been involved and have received training. The material is well produced, but data concerning the success of the trial are still being processed. ReMIT did not carry out its own analysis. ReMIT is also involved in an international project funded by the European Social Fund to review gender issues in the transport industry.

20. Equal opportunities is an item at learners' progress reviews, but it is largely a cursory check that they are being treated equally and is not used as an opportunity to develop learners' understanding. Equal opportunities issues are included in the induction provided by ReMIT's staff at the work placement. Despite this, inspectors found widespread low awareness of equal opportunities.

21. Equal opportunities is an agenda item at quarterly staff meetings. Occasionally, guest speakers on various aspects of equal opportunities attend. Equal opportunities is covered

in the induction of new staff and the company's equal opportunities policy is included in staff handbooks. However, there has been insufficient formal staff training and at least one regional equal opportunities manager has received no equal opportunities training.

22. ReMIT checks employers' equal opportunities policies and paperwork when the contract for the work placement is set up or renewed. Although employers are given guidance in ReMIT's 10-point guide to equal opportunities, some still display inappropriate material and do not challenge inappropriate behaviour. Some of ReMIT's staff do not challenge employers' practices sufficiently.

23. One new regional headquarters and training centre is on a ground-floor site with easy access and other facilities for the disabled. Other premises are on higher floors with either no lift access or lifts that are unsuitable for wheelchairs.

Quality assurance

Contributory grade 4

24. Since 1994, ReMIT has had a quality assurance system externally accredited to ISO 9002, which is an international quality assurance standard. There is a quality assurance manual, which contains details of the quality assurance system, policies, procedures, work instructions and forms. Many of the original procedures are still in use and most policies are up to date. There are plans to upgrade the quality assurance system to meet the more recent ISO 9002, 2000 standards.

25. A national quality assurance manager was appointed in March 2002 to review arrangements and introduce a new quality assurance framework. There is a designated quality assurance officer in each regional office. There are regular meetings and their agenda deal with paperwork and issues concerning the policy and procedures specified in the quality assurance manual. There are nine trained internal quality assurance auditors. Quality assurance audits are carried out in each region twice each year and there are records of reports and actions taken.

26. Internal verification is thorough and good progress has been made to establish standardised national systems. ReMIT has appointed a national manager to act as chief internal verifier, who liaises closely with the awarding bodies. There are monthly meetings between the national manager and the regional NVQ training centre managers. The meetings are used to share information effectively and discuss issues raised by external verifiers. The regional NVQ training centre managers liaise closely with external verifiers. Some external verifiers meet with assessors to ensure they understand the standards and practices expected of them. There is a detailed internal verification plan and all learners' portfolios are verified once a year. Assessors are observed twice a year, or more often when they are inexperienced. Assessors meet at least twice a year within each region to review practices. There is a good set of management reports and records to support the integrity of the internal verification systems.

27. Quality assurance is inadequate in some key areas and the overall framework is out of date. There are no formal observations or quality assurance systems for off-the-job training at colleges, or ReMIT's training centres, or on-the-job training. The quality assurance manual is out of date. Policies and procedures do not reflect current business operations, especially the national activities of key accounts and recruitment. Management review of quality assurance has lapsed. The internal audit process to check compliance with procedures has only been carried out twice in the past six months. A new internal audit of financial and management controls has been introduced, but is not yet included as part of the policies and procedures.

28. Other quality assurance arrangements include the activities of the national training standards manager. There is an annual internal audit in each region, which mainly concentrates on the integrity of the assessment process, but includes discussions with learners and employers, as well as observation of assessment practices. This activity is in addition to the procedures for internal verification.

29. In 2002, ReMIT commissioned a national stakeholder survey, which gives a national and regional analysis of the views of learners, employers and staff. It has provided an effective baseline for future target-setting and continuous improvement. A particularly good feature of the survey was the analysis of staff's feedback, based on work done in learning diaries. The stakeholder survey did not include colleges or parents, and did not ask questions about key skills.

30. ReMIT has contracts with all of the colleges it uses, but there are very few service level agreements. Where there are service level agreements they are not specific enough and do not provide sufficient information to allow service levels to be reviewed adequately. The monitoring of subcontractors is weak and is not sufficiently clear or thorough. A few colleges receive regular visits from field staff and, in some cases, actions are discussed and agreed at the end of each block-release programme. Most colleges are visited once each term or at least once each year. The reports produced by staff following these visits are bland and lack detail. There are some cases where problems and issues relating to learners are not discovered for many months, or even years. ReMIT has sometimes been slow in dealing with employers' concerns over poor training at some colleges. Some staff are not sufficiently confident to review the work carried out by the college. ReMIT does not seek information from subcontractors which can help develop its quality assurance process, such as requesting teaching observation reports from colleges or systematically monitoring external inspection reports for colleges.

31. There are regional inconsistencies in the standard of training programmes. In one region there was a variety of poor practices affecting learners, which had not been identified through management control systems. The induction programme for some learners is bland and uninformative. Not enough is done to evaluate the effectiveness of induction. The content and length of time spent on reviewing learners' progress is particularly varied. Some progress reviews are superficial and lack relevant information. Frequently, employers are not involved in the progress review process, but are just asked to sign the form after the event. Learners on the customer service training programme are not visited often enough and some learners on the motor vehicle training programmes have not been assessed for over a year. Some assessors do not provide enough feedback to learners following a visit. Internal verification for retailing qualifications is carried out at the end of the programme and not as an ongoing process. Some health and safety checks have failed to identify potential risks and some management monitoring of the checklists has not been carried out effectively.

32. ReMIT's first self-assessment report was produced in 1998 and its most recent report was produced in April 2002. Staff were aware of its existence but had little to do with its development. The report was helpful in preparing for the inspection and described the organisation and its activities well. It described some key weaknesses accurately. However, some judgements regarding strengths are regarded by inspectors as standard practice and, although some weaknesses were identified accurately, other weaknesses identified by inspectors were not. Information on, and analysis of, their business administration and retailing training programmes were superficial. The self-assessment report did not contain sufficient analyses and judgements regarding the performance of

the training programmes.

Good Practice

One region has a key skills assessor who is responsible for key skills training across the region. The assessor visits all of the colleges with which ReMIT subcontracts and monitors their approach to key skills. ReMIT provides support to help develop the key skills appropriate to motor vehicle modern apprentices. ReMIT provides effective guidance and shares good practice.

Poor Practice

There is evidence that the purpose of learners' progress reviews has not been defined adequately by programme managers and translated into staff practices. Training co-ordinators are asked to provide pastoral support to learners and check health and safety. There is insufficient focus on learners' progress in these reviews. Training co-ordinators do not always have current information about learners' progress, so learners' achievements and short-term targets are not discussed routinely.

AREAS OF LEARNING

Engineering, technology & manufacturing

Grade 3

Programmes inspected	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Work-based learning for young people	5423	3

33. There are 5,423 learners participating in ReMIT's engineering programmes, of whom 4,647 are advanced modern apprentices, 505 are foundation modern apprentices and 271 are following other work-based learning programmes. All are working for NVQs at level 2 and 3. Modern apprentices train as heavy vehicle, light vehicle, motorcycle and diesel technicians. There are also auto-electricians, refinishers, body repairers and fast-fit operators. There are 5,608 male learners and 43 female learners. ReMIT works with over 4,000 companies, including main dealerships, small garages, body repairers and franchised outlets. Learners are expected to achieve a foundation modern apprenticeship in two and a half years and an advanced modern apprenticeship in three and a half years. They are recruited through direct contact, the careers service, and through employers' recommendations. Learners can join the training programme at any time but most join between July and September. There is a standard selection test and some employers also have their own selection criteria. Induction is carried out in the workplace by ReMIT's training co-ordinator and the employers' staff. The company subcontracts most off-the-job training to further education colleges, including key skills training. In some regions there are also ReMIT training centres and some employers also have their own training centres. Learners attend off-the-job training on block or day release and some of the block-release courses are residential. Some colleges are also contracted by ReMIT to carry out assessments and visits to the workplace. ReMIT's staff are a mixture of employed and self-employed, and almost all are occupationally qualified and experienced. Learners are usually visited every six weeks in the workplace, either by an assessor or a training co-ordinator. Training co-ordinators are responsible for pastoral care, health and safety, college links and assessing employers' suitability. In some regions, there are staff with the dual roles of assessor and training co-ordinator.

RETAIL MOTOR INDUSTRY TRAINING LIMITED

The following tables show the achievement and retention rates available up to the time of the inspection.

Work-based learning for young people																
Advanced modern apprenticeships (AMA)																
	2001-02		2000-01		1999-2000		1998-99		1997-98		1996-97					
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number of starts	2101		2418		2345		2014		1899		1109					
Retained*	39		147	6	282	12	654	32	1028	54	722	65				
Successfully completed	44		117	5	251	11	592	29	920	48	635	57				
Still in learning	1720		1512	63	973	41	368	18	52	3	22	2				

*retained learners are those who have stayed in learning for at least the planned duration of their training programmes, or have successfully completed their programme within the time allowed

Work-based learning for young people																
Foundation modern apprenticeships (FMA)																
	2001-02		2000-01		1999-2000		1998-99		1997-98		1996-97					
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number of starts	243		363		638		679		145							
Retained*	2		16	4	82	13	164	24	41	28						
Successfully completed	0		7	2	51	8	83	12	32	22						
Still in learning	182		183	50	105	16	35	5	0	0						

*retained learners are those who have stayed in learning for at least the planned duration of their training programmes, or have successfully completed their programme within the time allowed

Work-based learning for young people																
NVQ Training																
	2001-02		2000-01		1999-2000		1998-99		1997-98		1996-97					
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number of starts	118		98		193		462		1271		999					
Retained*	6		8	8	58	30	154	33	513	40	483	48				
Successfully completed	6		3	3	41	21	109	24	412	32	424	42				
Still in learning	87		70	71	51	26	22	5	37	3	4	0				

*retained learners are those who have stayed in learning for at least the planned duration of their training programmes, or have successfully completed their programme within the time allowed

STRENGTHS

- good development of vocational skills
- good learning resources
- good assessment practice
- good training and pastoral support for learners
- good additional training for some learners

WEAKNESSES

- slow progress for some learners towards achievement of their qualifications
- insufficient employer understanding of modern apprenticeship frameworks
- poor planning and recording of training
- poor achievement and retention rates of foundation modern apprentices

OTHER IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

- better liaison between assessors and training co-ordinators
- more use of employers' training programmes to support NVQ achievement
- more practical work in off-the-job sessions at ReMIT's training centres

34. There are good training opportunities at work for learners, which teach, develop and improve their vocational skills through good work-based supervision and training. Much of this training at work is carried out individually with experienced and well-qualified engineers. Learners operate in a wide range of workplaces, from franchised dealerships and major vehicle manufacturers, to large commercial workshops and small owner-managed garages. Learners are well supervised by experienced workplace managers. In some cases there are nominated mentors. Learners are encouraged to develop skills and progressively carry out more complex tasks unsupervised. Generally, learners have ample opportunities to collect portfolio evidence. There are good opportunities for learners to progress within their company and some of them move into supervisory positions. Off-the-job training is generally well organised by colleges, although it is not always linked effectively to the practical skills and experience gained in the workplace. Learners develop communication skills and other key skills at work but ReMIT's staff and the workplace supervisors only occasionally plan NVQ competence requirements to coincide with learners' current work.

35. Learning resources at work are generally good and, in dedicated manufacturers' facilities, some are very good. Workshop facilities are good and include a wide range of specialist tools and equipment. Many learners are trained to carry out tasks using the very latest vehicle technology and repair equipment. ReMIT has a thorough approval process before placing a learner with an employer. Checks are made to ensure learners' safety and the quality of the learning resources. Most learners are employed from the start of training.

36. Most colleges used by ReMIT have good training resources, with modern equipment which meets industry specifications. This includes good-quality electrical and

electronic fault diagnosis equipment, and body-repair chassis-alignment equipment. A few colleges are exceptionally well resourced and supported by motor manufacturers' expertise and equipment. Most learners have access to a wide range of the latest motor vehicles in good mechanical condition.

37. There is good assessment to support the achievement of competence to the industry's NVQ standards. In most cases, qualified and experienced staff subcontracted by ReMIT, regularly assess learners' competence in the workplace. A full range of evidence is considered and assessors give learners appropriate time to demonstrate their skill and understanding. Assessors work flexibly and sensitively, and are good at identifying suitable assessment opportunities and evidence. They are experienced and most have good occupational competence, which enables them to carry out effective assessments in the workplace. Assessment is generally well documented and well organised. There is good communication with the learners and learners' feedback on the assessment is recorded. ReMIT's assessors also complete a workplace assessment review report, which indicates the learners' progress for each individual NVQ unit, and targets the tasks required for the next assessment. However, employers do not get a copy of this report to assist in planning future assessment opportunities. There is insufficient liaison between assessors and ReMIT's training co-ordinators.

38. There is effective training and pastoral support for learners by ReMIT's field staff, employers and college staff. This support includes guidance and general personal support, as well as assisting learners with meeting the requirements of their qualification. All employers are keen to see learners develop skills and achieve their qualifications. Some learners have allocated workplace mentors, who provide guidance and support and assist in their personal development. Learners are sometimes given additional support by employers in order to practise specific skills and prepare for assessment. Experienced technicians assist learners with developing their understanding and share their knowledge and experience with learners. Learners appreciate this support and are made to feel part of a team within the workplace. Training co-ordinators also visit learners regularly when they attend college for off-the-job training. Training co-ordinators make themselves available to learners outside normal working hours. For those learners in Wales there is a Welsh-speaking assessor to assist them with understanding training and other specifications.

39. Many learners participate in additional training courses beyond the requirements of the modern apprenticeship framework. Some employers send learners on manufacturers' specialist short training courses to update their skills and familiarise them with the latest vehicle systems. In some cases, manufacturers are also enhancing the training by providing learners with additional skills and techniques for vehicle technology that is still under development. ReMIT also provides financial support towards the cost of some manufacturers' training courses to enable learners to attend. Employers' training courses are not linked adequately to NVQ achievement. Many learners achieve technical certificates, national certificates and higher national certificates in engineering, with some also achieving health and safety qualifications. Some of ReMIT's training centres are in regions which provide off-the-job training programmes, but these do not

offer adequate practical work to support learning.

40. Some learners make slow progress towards achieving their qualifications during their training programme. This has frustrated and demotivated some learners. There are examples of slow progress across all regions, but it is more evident in one particular region. There are some examples of learners achieving their NVQ within 15 months, but not having completed key skills or the additional coaching qualification. In another example, a subcontractor did not assess learners for two years. The current policy is for continuous assessment and recording for the NVQ and key skills from the start of training. However, with large numbers of learners in the training programmes who started several years ago, learners' records do not show any significant effect of this policy.

41. Most employers are unaware of the structure, purpose and content of the modern apprenticeship framework. There are exceptions, where manufacturers and employers are very involved in the training programmes but employers' understanding of how the standards in the NVQ relate to their business requirements is generally low. They are unsure of their role and responsibilities in assisting the learners in achieving the NVQ and key skills. Many employers regard the individual learning plan as the responsibility of ReMIT and the colleges. Employers are not always involved sufficiently in learners' progress reviews. Employers do not receive a copy of the report. Some reviews do not record accurately what actually took place. Many learners do not know which NVQ units they are working towards. Most learners' progress reviews do not set sufficiently clear targets for progression. Learners often do not understand what is required to complete their portfolios of evidence and are dependent on training co-ordinators and assessors to cross-reference evidence. Many learners have a poor awareness of key skills, which have not been explained to them adequately, and neither have they been given sufficient information to assist them in collecting or using work-based evidence for key skills assessment. Some learners are uncertain as to whether they are on a foundation or advanced modern apprenticeship.

42. The planning and recording of training is poor and encourages the view that modern apprenticeships are achieved by time-serving. Learning plans are not specific to individual learners' needs. There are no individual targets, or short-term targets for NVQ units, key skills units, or information about college programmes and certificates. The only date set is the end date of the training programme. There is no information about on-the-job training in terms of locations, work content or timescales. Some learning plans do not give the correct level of key skills training to be achieved. Learners receive a personal copy of their learning plan, but it is not updated and progress review dates are not recorded. Some learners are given a list of tasks to complete from their assessor. A number of key account employers ensure that their learners follow recognised schemes of work and ensure that they receive specialised training schedules.

43. The achievement rate for the advanced modern apprentices is satisfactory, but the achievement rate of foundation modern apprentices is poor, declining from 22 per cent in 1996-97 to 2 per cent in 2000-01. The retention rate for foundation modern

apprentices is also poor, remaining at around 24 per cent for the past four years. Of those learners who started in 2000-01, 50 per cent are still in training. The number of foundation modern apprentices is gradually reducing, and over the past two years they represent 11 per cent of all those who started motor vehicle training. The retention rates for NVQ learners are also poor. These learners represent 2 per cent of all learners who started their training over the past two years.

Good Practice

Some employers have joined together to review training arrangements with ReMIT, which has resulted in some important initiatives. For example, learners are now able to access specialised equipment in other employers' premises and some modern apprentices have had extra workshop training sessions scheduled. Employers have reported better understanding of the requirements of the training programme as a result of the training review meeting with ReMIT.

Poor Practice

One learner had not been visited frequently enough or given sufficient information about the requirements of the training programme. ReMIT had little contact with the employer, who was also unaware of the modern apprenticeship framework. This learner believed that simply going to college would be sufficient to become a modern apprentice, and so did the employer.

Business administration, management & professional**Grade 4**

Programmes inspected	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Work-based learning for young people	104	4

44. ReMIT provides foundation and advanced modern apprenticeships and NVQ training in business administration for 104 learners. There are 79 advanced modern apprentices, 19 foundation modern apprentices and six NVQ learners. Most learners are recruited by referrals from employers and on recommendation from previous learners and careers advisers, and can start training at any time of the year. ReMIT's staff interview all applicants and the recruitment process includes an aptitude test. Any support required by the learners is identified during this interview and assessment process. Learners are trained at a range of motor industry retailing businesses. All learners receive an induction at the workplace from ReMIT's training co-ordinators and their employer. All training is carried out on the job. Assessors and training co-ordinators visit learners in the workplace at least once every six to seven weeks to review training and carry out workplace assessments.

The following tables show the achievement and retention rates available up to the time of the inspection.

Work-based learning for young people														
Advanced modern apprenticeships (AMA)	2001-02		2000-01		1999-2000		1998-99		1997-98		1996-97			
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
	Number of starts	39		54		47		64		37		24		
Retained*	0		5		10		17		21		12	50		
Successfully completed	0		4		8		12		19		12	50		
Still in learning	34		24		8		12		1		0	0		

*retained learners are those who have stayed in learning for at least the planned duration of their training programmes, or have successfully completed their programme within the time allowed

Work-based learning for young people														
Foundation modern apprenticeships (FMA)	2001-02		2000-01		1999-2000		1998-99		1997-98					
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
	Number of starts	7		9		16		33		3				
Retained*	1		3		2		10		1					
Successfully completed	1		2		1		7		0					
Still in learning	4		4		7		2		2					

*retained learners are those who have stayed in learning for at least the planned duration of their training programmes, or have successfully completed their programme within the time allowed

Work-based learning for young people																
NVQ Training	2001-02		2000-01		1999-2000		1998-99		1997-98							
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
	Number of starts	2				1		5		34						
Retained*	0				1	100	3	60	11	32						
Successfully completed	0				1	100	3	60	10	29						
Still in learning	0				0	0	0	0	6	18						

*retained learners are those who have stayed in learning for at least the planned duration of their training programmes, or have successfully completed their programme within the time allowed

STRENGTHS

- good range of learning opportunities at work
- good training support for learners by ReMIT's staff and employers

WEAKNESSES

- poor achievement and retention rates
- poor planning and co-ordination of the training programme
- slow progress for some learners towards achievement of their qualifications

OTHER IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

- better reinforcement of induction topics

45. Work placements are good and include a wide range of motor vehicle dealerships. Many of the dealerships are part of national organisations and all offer a good range of learning opportunities in business administration. Some of them provide in-house training events and workshops that enhance the learners' knowledge and experience and complement their NVQ training programmes. Many learners attend their company's head office for courses in accounting practice, sales and administration practices, and attend events at various motor manufacturers' premises, for which employers provide time off and expenses. Many workplace supervisors have themselves gained NVQs and provide their learners with support and advice. One of the larger motor dealerships, in partnership with the training provider, is arranging a three-day outdoor personal development course for all their learners. Learners have the opportunity to move around different departments in order to increase their knowledge and experience.

46. The training co-ordinators and assessors provide good support during their regular visits. Field staff visit learners every six to seven weeks. A new development is the active induction day, when all learners from an area are invited to attend. The event aims to provide opportunities for teamwork, projects and assignments, and encourages learners to feel part of an organisation committed to helping them achieve their objectives. For example, a learner with dyslexia was helped through a series of individual sessions with an assessor. Staff provide out-of-hours help for potential applicants who have to sit the aptitude assessment test but are still employed by another company and cannot attend during the day. Similarly, individual advice and guidance is often provided out of hours for learners who have difficulty with aspects of key skills training. On-the-job coaching and additional guidance and support for learners is provided by assessors when required. Induction topics are not explained through a sufficiently wide variety of training methods. Discussion and questions in learners' progress reviews are not used to check their knowledge of specific induction topics.

47. The modern apprenticeship framework achievement rates are poor and declining. Since 1996, the achievement rate for the advanced modern apprentices is 21 per cent. Since 1997, the achievement rate for the foundation modern apprenticeships is 16 per cent and 46 per cent for learners working towards NVQs. A significant number of people leave without achieving their target qualifications. The retention rate for the advanced modern apprentices over the past six years is 51 per cent. Since 1997, the retention rate for foundation modern apprentices is 44 per cent, and 53 per cent for learners working towards NVQs. Not enough is known about the reasons for people leaving their programme early. There has been no recent systematic analysis or management review of the training programme. Achievement and retention rates have not been monitored routinely.

48. The planning and co-ordination of the training programme is poor. All business administration training takes place in the workplace. The employers' internal training is not considered in the planning of learners' training programmes. When learners have participated in other training courses, assessors have not paid them sufficient attention as sources of evidence for competence. Individual learning plans do not contain information about employers' training opportunities or information relating to the tasks and content of learners' jobs.

49. Some learners are making slow progress towards their NVQs and key skills qualifications, despite carrying out work competently and being given responsibility by employers. Over 25 per cent of learners on the advanced modern apprenticeship programme have been on the training programme for over two years. There are many learners in the foundation modern apprenticeship also making slow progress. Over 58 per cent of them have been on the training programme for over two years. Some poor assessment practice in one of the regions has resulted in learners making a very slow start to their training programme. This is being remedied and learners are making up for lost time. Some learners are unaware of their progress and what they have to do next. There is insufficient short-term action-planning. Poor management of a subcontractor in

one region contributed to slow progress, with one learner taking two and a half years to complete a level 3 NVQ and key skills qualifications. Another learner took four years to complete a level 2 and 3 NVQ and key skills qualifications.

Poor Practice

A learner was unaware that training received from an employer would not count towards the modern apprenticeship unless valid evidence was collected or assessed by observation. Another learner had collected a large amount of evidence which was not valid. These learners were unaware of the possibility of observation in assessment.

Retailing, customer service & transportation**Grade 4**

Programmes inspected	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Work-based learning for young people	682	4

50. ReMIT provides training for advanced and foundation modern apprenticeships in vehicle parts and customer service, including key skills and NVQs at levels 2 and 3. There are 217 foundation apprentices, 451 advanced modern apprentices and 14 learners working towards NVQs at levels 2 and 3. Of the advanced modern apprentices, 346 are on the motor parts training programme and 105 are on the customer service training programme. Of the foundation modern apprentices, 78 are on the motor parts training programme and 139 are on the customer service training programme. Learners are employed in a range of independent and national companies. ReMIT has assessors in all regions who are occupationally competent and experienced in the assessment process. Assessors visit learners in the workplace every 12 weeks to carry out assessments. Training co-ordinators visit learners in between assessment visits to review their progress and provide pastoral support. ReMIT recruits learners in a variety of ways, such as advertising in local newspapers and through careers events. After satisfactory completion of a selection test, learners are sent for an interview to garages that have vacancies. Induction is carried out in training centres and in the workplace. Off-the-job training for the vehicle parts NVQ is carried out at local colleges, with courses designed by ReMIT. Some learners are unable to access these training courses and receive individual coaching from their assessors.

The following tables show the achievement and retention rates available up to the time of the inspection.

Work-based learning for young people																
Advanced modern apprenticeships (AMA)	2001-02		2000-01		1999-2000		1998-99		1997-98							
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
	Number of starts	223		250		199		174		115						
Retained*	10		8	3	29	15	39	22	48	42						
Successfully completed	5		6	2	18	9	19	11	35	30						
Still in learning	168		163	65	73	37	41	24	6	5						

*retained learners are those who have stayed in learning for at least the planned duration of their training programmes, or have successfully completed their programme within the time allowed

RETAIL MOTOR INDUSTRY TRAINING LIMITED

Work-based learning for young people																
Foundation modern apprenticeships (FMA)	2001-02		2000-01		1999-2000		1998-99		1997-98							
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
	Number of starts	184		48		84		88		13						
Retained*	1		4	8	19	23	27	31	5	38						
Successfully completed	0		0	0	7	8	17	19	4	31						
Still in learning	147		31	65	29	35	10	11	0	0						

*retained learners are those who have stayed in learning for at least the planned duration of their training programmes, or have successfully completed their programme within the time allowed

Work-based learning for young people																
NVQ Training	2001-02		2000-01		1999-2000		1998-99		1997-98							
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
	Number of starts	5		10		18		77		154						
Retained*	0		3	30	5	28	22	29	58	38						
Successfully completed	0		0	0	3	17	27	35	45	29						
Still in learning	4		4	40	2	11	2	3	2	1						

*retained learners are those who have stayed in learning for at least the planned duration of their training programmes, or have successfully completed their programme within the time allowed

STRENGTHS

- good range of work experience
- good personal support for learners

WEAKNESSES

- ineffective co-ordination of training
- some weak assessment practice
- poor target-setting
- poor achievement rates

OTHER IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

- better reinforcement of induction topics

51. Learners work in a variety of dealerships and garages. They are part of busy teams

and develop good interpersonal skills through their work activities. They gain experience in the basic procedures and use a range of industry standard equipment. Sometimes they are trained in advanced business processes and gain higher level skills. ReMIT has been involved with many of these employers for a number of years and has developed good working relationships with them. Employers are supportive of their learners and are committed to training and developing their staff. Many employers have their own training schemes in which learners are encouraged to participate. Some employers plan progression within the business and move learners through a range of work experiences to enable them to gain skills.

52. Learners receive good personal support from their training co-ordinators and assessors. Learners have good working relationships with ReMIT's staff and value their support. Support is offered to learners in a variety of areas, such as pay and conditions at work, as well as personal problems. Assessors are sympathetic to the demands of the businesses and visit learners outside normal working hours to assess special events. One assessor visits learners in their homes, to give extra support and tuition to those learners who have demanding jobs or insufficient time at work to study.

53. The co-ordination of training is ineffective. The different elements of learners' training programmes are not always linked clearly. The individual learning plan is often incomplete and does not adequately provide an up-to-date description of what learners are meant to be doing. Individual learning plans are not updated and progress reviews are not recorded. Some learners attend college for background knowledge and key skills training. The information about this element of training and the learners' progress is not always available at the time of the progress review. Often, college learning is not linked to work-based learning and assessors are not able to refer to it or use it as a basis for progression. Some elements of competences gained in employers' training sessions are not used to support evidence towards NVQ assessment.

54. Some learners receive training directly from ReMIT's staff in off-the-job training centres or through individual coaching. Some of this training is better integrated with on-the-job training, but it is not always co-ordinated effectively to enable learners' programmes to be planned progressively. Some learners experience delays and have to wait for elements of their training programme as a result of this poor co-ordination.

55. There is some weak assessment practice. In most cases, assessors visit learners five times each year to carry out formal assessments. In the context of vehicle parts operations and customer service, this is insufficient to meet the reasonable needs of the learners. There is insufficient observation of performance in the workplace. There are learners who have been in their job roles for some time and are competent at a range of tasks, but have not had observed assessments documented to confirm their competence. Some of the learners' portfolios of evidence do not contain valid work products. Some learners have workplace evidence in their portfolios but there are no candidate statements to prove competence. There are no workplace assessors to assist in the gathering of evidence and the recording of learners' performance in the workplace. Some witness statements are used, but verification of these is not always

sufficiently thorough. Internal verification is only carried out at the end of the learners' training programmes. In one region, assessment is subcontracted and an assessor visits the learners every four to six weeks to carry out assessment, including observations in the workplace. Learners assessed by this organisation are making good progress and the standard of their work is satisfactory.

56. Individual learning plans are not based on the specific needs of each learner. They do not detail training required or the planned sequence of learning. This prevents learners understanding what they have to do in order to achieve their qualifications. Targets are often set for the completion of the training programme only, and do not reflect the learners' ability or progress during the programme. Learning plans are not updated in response to learners' progress and achievement. Reviews are not used effectively to review learners' progress. Many learners are making slow progress. Often, learners are on the training programme for periods of up to 12 months but have insufficient evidence in their portfolios. Assessment planning is weak. Targets on assessment plans are often insufficient to cover the period of time between assessment visits and are ineffective in ensuring that learning is on target.

57. There are low achievement rates on the modern apprenticeship programmes, particularly for those working towards the motor parts qualification. On the advanced modern apprenticeship programme, the achievement rate has fallen from 37 per cent in 1996-1997 to 12 per cent in 1998-99. Similarly, the achievement rate on the foundation modern apprenticeship programme has fallen from 36 per cent in 1997-98 to 8 per cent in 1999-2000.

58. Learners receive a satisfactory induction. Those learners who receive their induction at college can satisfactorily recall its content. However, it is rarely discussed again and learners who have been in training for some time have poor recall of such issues as equal opportunities and appeals procedures.

Poor Practice

One learner was not informed adequately about the training programme and did not understand the role of the NVQ, its standards or how assessment worked. The learner believed that achievement of the qualification was gained after a fixed period of time had elapsed. This belief was reinforced by the employer, who also knew nothing about occupational standards in the industry, and by the fact that the end date of the training programme was the only target to the learner's learning plan.