

INSPECTION REPORT

Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea

22 April 2003



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

- work-based learning for all people 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

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.

INSPECTION REPORT

Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea

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INSPECTION REPORT

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROVIDER

1. The Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea's employment project (the employment project) operates as part of its community education division and has been in operation since 1991. The employment project operates on a cost recovery basis and provides training in social care and public services, and visual and performing arts and media, from a training centre in North Kensington. For operational reasons, the training programmes do not operate concurrently. During the inspection there were no clients in social care and public services.
2. The senior management team consists of the project manager and two senior managers. The project manager reports to the head of adult learning skills and is responsible for the operational management of the employment project. The employment project employs nine staff, comprising the project manager, two training co-ordinators, one administrator and five sessional tutors. The project team is based in Kensington town hall.
3. Training is funded through the Central London Learning and Skills Council (LSC), the London Jobcentre Plus region and European Social Fund (ESF) initiatives.

SCOPE OF PROVISION

Visual & performing arts & media

4. The 'Media Prospects' programme consists of an intensive two-week course supplemented by individual tutorials, day or evening workshops for professional skills, and a series of informal group networking meetings. It is open to employed and unemployed people aged over 18 and is designed to provide them with the knowledge and skills to find employment in the media industries. The programme is managed by a co-ordinator, who is a member of the borough council's employment project section, and is taught by a core team of four external tutors, with additional contributions from guest speakers. The programme takes place four times each year. It does not lead to any externally accredited awards.
5. The programme has only recently been introduced and the first group met in January 2003. It replaces a media jobsearch short job-focused training programme (SJFT), which was introduced in 1999 and funded by Jobcentre Plus. The programme is funded jointly for two years by Central London LSC and the ESF. Nine clients were recruited to the January 2003 course and 12 clients began the second course, which started in April 2003. Of the current group, 67 per cent of clients are women and 33 per cent are members of minority ethnic groups.

ABOUT THE INSPECTION

Number of inspectors	2
Number of inspection days	8
Number of learner interviews	18
Number of staff interviews	11
Number of employer interviews	3
Number of locations/sites/learning centres visited	2

OVERALL JUDGEMENT

6. The quality of the provision is adequate to meet the reasonable needs of those receiving it. The quality of training in visual and performing arts and media is good. The leadership and management of the employment project are satisfactory. The organisation's approach to equality of opportunity is satisfactory, but its arrangements for quality assurance are unsatisfactory.

GRADES

grade 1 = outstanding, grade 2 = good, grade 3 = satisfactory, grade 4 = unsatisfactory, grade 5 = very weak

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

Visual & performing arts & media	2
Contributory grades:	
Other government-funded provision	2

KEY FINDINGS

Achievement and standards

7. **Clients achieve well on the 'Media Prospects' programme**, which is highly effective in enabling them to improve their employment prospects in the media industries. The training programme started in January 2003 and 60 per cent of those who have completed their programme have gained jobs already. Clients improve their skills and understanding and learn techniques and methods which help them to gain jobs. For example, one former client who recently gained employment with a major broadcasting organisation used techniques learned on the training programme to answer interview questions clearly and demonstrate an understanding of television production.

8. During the intensive two-week training course, clients' self-confidence increases.

They learn to work positively with others and are able to present themselves well. The supplementary workshops that follow the two-week course help clients to acquire specific professional skills, which improve their employment prospects by allowing them to work with experts in the media industries.

Quality of education and training

Grades awarded to learning sessions

	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Total
Visual & performing arts & media	0	2	2	0	0	0	0	4
Total	0	2	2	0	0	0	0	4

9. Teaching is good and uses clients' knowledge and experience well. Lessons are well planned and the content is challenging and relevant to the clients' needs. Tutors emphasise key learning points and use a variety of teaching methods to motivate clients, including group tasks, physical activities, and discussions. **Tutors and guest speakers have significant expertise and experience** of employment in the media industries, including film, television, radio, theatre and dance. Tutors use their experience to ensure that all aspects of the programme, and particularly job-seeking and interviewing skills, thoroughly relate to employment in the media.

10. The training programme uses a satisfactory range of resources, including a professional-standard digital video camera. Most course handouts are clear, informative and well presented. **However, the teaching room is too small, cluttered, and the ceiling is too low for movement activities.** Physical access to the room for people with restricted mobility is adequate.

11. Clients' progress during the two-week course is not assessed sufficiently. Clients receive informal feedback during lessons and their achievements are discussed in detail in the week following the two-week course. However, during the course, clients are not encouraged sufficiently to assess their own learning. Much of the learning takes place during group sessions. Support for clients on the two-week course is good and clients value the care that staff take to support their pastoral needs.

12. There is no formal assessment of literacy, numeracy and language support needs. Most clients on the current intake are graduates or have other significant media-related qualifications. Clients with significant literacy, numeracy or language support needs are referred to other training providers.

Leadership and management

13. The media programme is well organised and managed. Staff have a very good understanding of the purpose of the programme and ensure that it works smoothly and effectively. Staff are carefully selected for the training programme and work and

communicate well together. Clients' ideas and suggestions are used effectively to improve the training programme.

14. **Internal and external communication is good** and meets the needs of the team effectively. Staff understand their roles and responsibilities and are motivated and enthusiastic about their work. Communication between programme co-ordinators and tutors is good. However, there are no joint staff meetings and staff do not meet formally to discuss cross-organisational issues. External communication with employers is good.

15. **Links with local and national employers are particularly effective.** However, media employers' views are not used sufficiently to evaluate the training programme. Employers offer clients good job opportunities and further promotion. For example, one client was promoted to a supervisory and recently a managerial position. Resources in the workplaces are good.

16. **Staff are well qualified and benefit from good staff development.** Staff participate in an appropriate range of learning events to meet individual and organisational needs. Staff value the flexible working patterns and appreciate the support they receive from managers.

17. **Staff take effective actions to remove barriers to learning and to promote equality of opportunity.** Staff have identified ways to bring disaffected individuals into learning programmes. Staff provide clients with good support, to overcome their barriers to learning and achieve their potential. For example, staff negotiated funding arrangements on behalf of one client and arranged a media work placement abroad for another. Many clients receive continuing support after the end of their training programme. The employment project has recently developed a programme to help long-term unemployed clients back into the job market. The media programme has been successful in recruiting women and clients from under-represented groups and its teaching materials promote diversity.

18. **Clients' feedback is used effectively to improve standards.** It is collected at the end of each programme, then collated and analysed. The employment project is responsive to clients' and employers' needs and deals with their concerns and suggestions promptly and effectively.

19. Close attention is paid to health and safety issues in the workplace, but the employment project does not adequately ensure that employers have appropriate equal opportunities policies. **Staff do not adequately monitor employers' compliance with equal opportunities legislation.**

20. **The quality assurance system is incomplete.** There are no overall quality assurance procedures to guide staff, and quality assurance activity is recorded inadequately. The effectiveness of many key areas of teaching and learning are not evaluated regularly. The quality assurance system does not adequately cover recruitment, induction and clients' progress reviews. There have been few observations of learning. Where observations occur, they do not lead to effective target-setting to ensure improvement.

21. **The self-assessment and development-planning process is inadequate.** Self-assessment is weak and it is not a central part of the employment project's activities for planning improvements. The self-assessment report is too descriptive and does not identify the employment project's strengths and weaknesses. Some of the strengths identified were no more than normal practice. Consultant tutors and employers were not sufficiently involved in the self-assessment process.

The following strengths and weaknesses were identified during this inspection:

Leadership and management

Strengths

- good internal and external communication
- particularly effective links with employers
- good staff development
- effective action to remove barriers to learning
- effective use of clients' feedback to improve standards

Weaknesses

- inadequate monitoring of equality of opportunity in the workplace
- incomplete quality assurance arrangements
- inadequate self-assessment and development planning process

Visual & performing arts & media

Strengths

- good preparation for clients' employment in the media industries
- good teaching
- significant media expertise among teaching staff
- well-designed course which meets the clients' needs
- extensive and effective contacts with the media industry

Weaknesses

- insufficiently thorough reviews of individual clients' progress
- inadequate use of employers' feedback to evaluate the training programme

WHAT LEARNERS LIKE ABOUT ROYAL BOROUGH OF KENSINGTON & CHELSEA:

- precise focus on getting jobs
- good contacts with media employers
- tutors' expertise
- challenging and demanding learning
- supportive peer group
- guest speakers
- travel fares paid
- 'people care, they want to help you.'

WHAT LEARNERS THINK ROYAL BOROUGH OF KENSINGTON & CHELSEA COULD IMPROVE:

- the cluttered teaching room
- more visits to media production facilities
- more individual help with curriculum vitae preparation
- some attention to European/global media prospects, recognising ESF funding
- more computer work
- more home-care related work

KEY CHALLENGES FOR ROYAL BOROUGH OF KENSINGTON & CHELSEA:

- design and develop a comprehensive quality assurance process
- ensure that there are adequate systems in the workplace to protect clients and to promote their rights
- develop a thorough self-assessment process that critically examines all key aspects of the organisation
- record more effectively important aspects of communication and organisational development

DETAILED INSPECTION FINDINGS

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Grade 3

The following strengths and weaknesses were identified during this inspection:

Strengths

- good internal and external communication
- particularly effective links with employers
- good staff development
- effective action to remove barriers to learning
- effective use of clients' feedback to improve standards

Weaknesses

- inadequate monitoring of equality of opportunity in the workplace
- incomplete quality assurance arrangements
- inadequate self-assessment and development planning process

22. The employment project's management systems and processes, including aspects of equality of opportunity and quality assurance arrangements, apply to both of its training programmes. The head of adult learning and skills prepares the strategic plan, which sets out priorities and objectives and strategies for achieving them. The broad aims are translated into specific objectives and targets within the service delivery plan, which outlines progress against the previous year's performance and sets out the financial, staffing, and improvement targets, and review arrangements. However, the improvement targets are not sufficiently detailed. For example, there are no specific targets for retention, completion, progression into employment, or widening participation for the various training programmes. Staff understand the organisation's values, aims and priorities, and are familiar with the service delivery plan.

23. The management information system is adequate for the needs of the organisation. Data are collected and analysed centrally to assess monthly variations in clients' achievement, retention and progression rates. Managers use this data to monitor performance against contractual targets, but it is not used effectively to help staff set targets for each intake.

24. Internal and external communication is good and meets the needs of the team effectively. Staff have a good understanding of their roles and responsibilities, and of the organisation's ethos and values. Contact between staff and managers is regular and effective, and communication between the programme co-ordinators and consultant tutors is good. However, there are no joint staff meetings and staff do not meet formally to discuss cross-organisational issues. External communication with employers is good.

25. Links with local and national employers are particularly effective and the employment project has long-established and close working relationships with many of them. Employers are closely involved in the training programmes and have contributed to some of the training sessions. Clients are able to shadow experienced staff in well-resourced workplaces to develop a realistic understanding of the nature of the work before formally applying for jobs. Employers offer clients good job opportunities and further promotion. For example, one client was promoted to a supervisory and, recently, a managerial position.

26. Staff are well qualified and benefit from good staff development. All of them receive an annual performance review. Guidelines relating to the process of the review and the roles and responsibilities of those involved are clear. Staff review documents identify all the relevant issues and links between the service delivery plan and staff targets are clear. Staff targets are agreed during the annual performance review, but they are not routinely monitored. Staff make good use of a wide range of development opportunities, including computer-based learning materials, and their development priorities are set according to individual development and organisational needs. Staff are motivated and enthusiastic and value the flexible working patterns and support they receive from managers. Consultant tutors are well qualified and also attend some staff development activities. However, staff with substantial workloads do not benefit from regular appraisals of their performance. Staff do not have clear job descriptions.

27. Clients' literacy, numeracy and language needs are assessed appropriately. During interviews, staff assess clients' aptitude to work in the media sector and their ability to effectively use numerical and printed information. Clients with significant literacy, numeracy or language support needs are referred to other training providers. None of the current clients has basic skills requirements.

Equality of opportunity

Contributory grade 3

28. The borough council has an equal opportunities policy, which includes a statement on equal opportunities and procedures for dealing with grievances, complaints and harassment. Clients receive a revised version of the policy, which is more appropriate to them. Clients and staff have a good understanding of equality of opportunity and are fully aware of their rights and responsibilities. Clients know what to do if they encounter discrimination, harassment, victimisation or bullying.

29. The borough council has a racial equality policy and action plan, and the employment project's managers are aware of them. They have ensured that there are adequate arrangements, which conform to the requirements of the 'Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000'. For example, data relating to clients' recruitment and progression into jobs are analysed by gender and racial origin, and staff have used this information to design new programmes to provide support to under-represented groups.

30. Staff take effective action to remove barriers to learning. Staff have identified ways to bring disaffected individuals into learning programmes and have designed specific programmes to meet the needs of lone parents and ex-offenders. Staff also provide

good support to clients to overcome their barriers to learning and to achieve their potential. For example, staff negotiated funding arrangements for one client who resides in a different borough, enabling the client to complete the training programme and find employment. To improve one client's employment prospects, staff arranged a media work placement abroad. Many clients receive continuing support beyond the completion of their training programme. To promote diversity and to encourage participation from under-represented groups, the borough council works closely with many voluntary sector and local community organisations and has recently developed a programme to help long-term unemployed clients back into the job market. Access to the training room for clients with restricted mobility is adequate.

31. The borough council does not adequately monitor employers' equal opportunities policies and practices at work placements. Close attention is paid to health and safety issues, but staff do not adequately monitor employers' compliance with equal opportunities legislation.

Quality assurance

Contributory grade 4

32. Quality assurance arrangements are incomplete. The employment project relies heavily on programme co-ordinators' individual monitoring practices. Quality assurance activity is recorded inadequately. The employment project operates a number of quality assurance arrangements, some of which are externally monitored national schemes. However, there are no overall quality assurance procedures to guide staff. Staff recognise the need for improving standards, but the existing quality assurance arrangements do not enable staff to identify improvements. For example, there are insufficient links between business planning, self-assessment and development planning. The effectiveness of key areas of teaching and learning are not evaluated regularly. The quality assurance system does not adequately cover recruitment, induction and clients' progress reviews, and there are few observations of learning. Where observations occur, they do not lead to effective target-setting to ensure improvement. A planned programme for lesson observation has recently been introduced, but at the time of the inspection it was too early to assess its effectiveness.

33. The employment project uses clients' feedback effectively to improve the standard of training. Clients' feedback is collected at the end of each training programme, when the results are collated and analysed. The employment project is responsive to clients' and employers' needs, and deals with their concerns and suggestions promptly and effectively. For example, comments about better resources for media clients have been acted on. Employers' views are gathered informally through meetings and telephone calls, but they are not collated and analysed.

34. The self-assessment and development planning process is inadequate. The employment project's first self-assessment report was produced in 2000 and its second and most recent report was updated in January 2003, but self-assessment is not an integral part of its strategy for planning improvements. The strategic plan and the business plan clearly identify effective self-assessment as a corporate objective, but its implementation has been weak. The self-assessment report was too descriptive and did

not clearly identify the employment project's strengths and weaknesses. Some of the strengths identified were no more than normal practice. Consultant tutors and employers were not sufficiently involved in the self-assessment process. Inspectors' findings matched many aspects of the subsequent development plan.

AREAS OF LEARNING

Visual & performing arts & media

Grade 2

Programmes inspected	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Other government-funded provision	13	2

The following strengths and weaknesses were identified during this inspection:

Strengths

- good preparation for clients' employment in the media industries
- good teaching
- significant media expertise among teaching staff
- well-designed course which meets the clients' needs
- extensive and effective contacts with the media industry

Weaknesses

- insufficiently thorough reviews of individual clients' progress
- inadequate use of employers' feedback to evaluate the training programme

Achievement and standards

35. Clients achieve well on the 'Media Prospects' programme, which is highly effective in enabling them to improve their employment prospects in the media industries. Clients increase their understanding of the techniques and methods which will help them. Three clients from the first programme have already gained employment. One former client who recently gained employment with a major broadcasting organisation used techniques learned on the training programme to answer interview questions and demonstrate an understanding of television production.

36. Clients on the training programme become more effective in identifying their employment goals and individual action plans. Many of them have some media knowledge or experience, but are often unclear about their most effective potential employment route. The two-week course enables them to clarify this and to determine relevant strategies to improve their employment prospects.

37. Clients also increase their confidence and belief in themselves. Many of them come to the training programme after periods of unemployment and the two-week course enables them to gain confidence in working with others and in presenting themselves more effectively. The supplementary workshops also contribute to clients' achievements, by enabling them to gain specific professional skills. In addition, they improve their employment prospects through networking with other clients and media practitioners.

38. In some classes, clients are not sufficiently encouraged to practise and develop effective learning skills, for example, through taking relevant notes to record key points and issues.

The following table shows the achievement and retention rates available up to the time of the inspection.

Other government funded																	
	2002-03																
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
Number of starts	21																
Retained*	5																
Planned learning completed	5																
Gained job	3																
Still in training	13																

*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

Quality of education and training

39. The teaching observed during the inspection was good or very good. Lessons are well planned, with a clear structure and their content is relevant to clients' needs and are appropriately challenging. Tutors emphasise key learning points and make effective use of a range of teaching methods, including group tasks, physical activities, and tutor-led discussions. Tutors use precise questions particularly well to encourage clients to focus on key issues and contribute effectively. They encourage clients to identify their prior skills and knowledge and constantly encourage them to relate the course content to their own personal and professional development.

40. The tutors and course contributors bring to the training programme significant expertise and experience of employment in the media industries. Many of the tutors have previously worked for major broadcasting organisations and in a variety of media: including film, television, radio, theatre and dance. Some are also published writers and current media practitioners. The two main strands of the two-week course are the acquisition of effective job-seeking skills and personal action-planning, which are thoroughly related to the context of employment in the media. The combination of clear teaching, with relevant learning points, closely related to media contexts, is highly effective in engaging the clients.

41. The training programme is well designed and meets the clients' and employers' needs. All activities are highly focused on enabling the clients to acquire the skills they need to gain employment in media-related occupations. The 'Media Prospects'

programme has a number of elements which are combined effectively to offer clients good support in their progress towards employment in the media. The initial meeting with the programme co-ordinator is used effectively to begin the process of action-planning. The two-week course provides a high level of skills development and confidence building. It is followed by individual review meetings, informal group networking and support meetings, and opportunities to attend specialist professional skills workshops. Clients use these post-course events to increase their skills and knowledge, to maintain their job-seeking motivation, and to extend their network of contacts. The training programme has a good balance of intensive training followed by helpful support activities.

42. Support for clients on the two-week course is good, though often informal. Clients value the care that staff take and their genuine interest in their progress and development. However, there is no structured process to identify and meet clients' individual needs, although staff demonstrate good knowledge of the clients and encourage them to identify appropriate development opportunities for themselves. There is no formal assessment of literacy, numeracy and language support needs. Most clients on the current intake are graduates or have other significant media-related qualifications. Clients with significant literacy, numeracy or language support needs are referred to other training providers.

43. The training programme uses a satisfactory range of resources, including handouts, flipcharts, overhead projectors and video recorders. The monitor screen with the video recorder is too small for the typical group size. The employment project has recently bought a professional-standard digital video camera. The room in which classes take place is barely adequate. It is cluttered by old furniture and items left by other users, and the ceiling is too low for movement activities. Access to the room for people with restricted mobility is adequate. Most course handouts are clear, informative and well presented.

44. Clients' experiences on the training programme are enriched by their contact with other clients. The programme's organisers encourage effective networking and motivate clients to learn with, and from, each other.

45. The training programme is not externally accredited and there is no formal assessment of clients' progress during, or at the end of, the course. Clients receive informal feedback during lessons. Course tutors and the programme co-ordinator are readily available to discuss individual issues with clients. Clients have a detailed individual review meeting with the programme co-ordinator in the week following the two-week course. However, the reviews of individual client's progress during the two-week course are insufficiently thorough. Clients are not encouraged to formally reflect on and assess their own learning during the course. Much of the learning takes place in the whole-group context and, although it affords the clients very rich and relevant experiences, this lack of attention to the reflective process, combined with insufficient regular feedback to individuals, is a weakness in the two-week course.

46. The training programme is well organised and managed. The programme co-ordinator is highly aware of the purpose of the course and ensures that it is functioning effectively. Staff are carefully selected to contribute to and teach on the course. One tutor is a former client of an earlier version of the 'Media Prospects' course. There are regular team meetings to review and develop the programme and the extensive use of email to facilitate communication. The teaching team work together constructively to ensure the smooth running of the training programme and make good use of clients' feedback, formal and informal, to improve it. However, employers' feedback is not used sufficiently to evaluate the training programme. The programme has been successful in recruiting women and members of minority ethnic groups and its teaching materials promote diversity.

47. The training programme uses an extensive and effective range of contacts with the media industry. The programme co-ordinator has been active in developing these and building management information about types of media employers and their likely recruitment needs. Employers value this thorough approach and appreciate the efficient matching of clients to work placements.