

# Kita Ltd Reinspection

---

Adult Learning Inspectorate Inspection Report 24 August 2006

**Reinspection date** 12 July 2007

---

**Inspection number** 302912

## Contents

<b>Background information .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Description of the provider.....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Overall effectiveness.....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Grades .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>About the reinspection .....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Leadership and management .....</b>	<b>7</b>
Equality of opportunity.....	8
Quality improvement.....	8
<b>Areas of learning .....</b>	<b>10</b>
Business administration and law .....	10
Engineering and manufacturing technologies .....	13

## Background information

### Inspection judgements

#### Overall effectiveness

The grades given for areas of learning and leadership and management will be used to arrive at a judgement about the overall effectiveness of the provider.

An **outstanding** provider should typically have leadership and management and at least half the areas of learning judged to be a grade 1. All area of learning grades will be graded 1 or 2.

A **good** provider should have leadership and management and at least half of the area of learning grades judged to be a grade 2 or better. A good training provider should not have any grade 4s, and few grade 3s in the areas of learning.

A **satisfactory** provider should have adequate or better grades in leadership and management and at least two thirds of the area of learning grades. An adequate provider might have a range of grades across areas of learning, some of which might be graded 4.

Provision will normally be deemed to be **inadequate** where more than one third of the area of learning grades and/or leadership and management are judged to be inadequate.

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

- grade 1 – outstanding
- grade 2 – good
- grade 3 – satisfactory
- grade 4 – inadequate

## Description of the provider

1. Kita Ltd (Kita) was established in 1967 by a number of engineering employers in the Maidstone area as a shared training resource under the name of Kent Industrial Training Association. Based in Sittingbourne, Kent, Kita has around 40 member companies in a wide range of occupational sectors. Approximately 75 companies participate in government-funded training provision. Kita is registered as a not-for-profit company. Government-funded training is offered to young people through apprenticeships and Train to Gain programmes. The provision includes apprenticeships and advanced apprenticeships in engineering and manufacturing technologies, business administration, customer services, contact centre professional, and leadership and management. For Train to Gain provision, Kita is part of a consortium led by West Kent College. Kita also provides human resource and health and safety training, and training and development services, to a large number of organisations, and not exclusively to member companies.
2. Kita has a board of directors including the managing director, a centre manager who is also the quality manager, and eight other employees. At the time of the inspection there were 84 learners. Since the previous inspection Kita has appointed a new centre manager.

## Overall effectiveness

**Reinspection Grade: 3**

3. The overall effectiveness of the provision is satisfactory. Following the reinspection, Kita's provision in business administration, and in engineering and manufacturing technologies, is satisfactory. Leadership and management, including arrangements for quality improvement and equality of opportunity, are also satisfactory.
4. The inspection team had some confidence in the reliability of the self-assessment process. Self-assessment is an inclusive process and engages a sample of employers, through the board of directors. Inspectors agreed with most of the judgements and grades in the report. The report is detailed, but does not make sufficiently clear judgements about the quality of training and learning. It makes little use of data to support judgements. The report contains insufficient evidence about the quality of subcontractors' provision.
5. The provider has demonstrated that it has sufficient capacity to make improvements. Kita has made good progress towards improving its provision since the previous inspection. It has a clear view of what it still needs to do to further address weaknesses not yet sufficiently resolved. Arrangements for quality improvement and self-assessment are satisfactory overall.

## Grades

grade1= outstanding, grade 2= good, grade 3= satisfactory, grade 4= inadequate

## Grades awarded at previous inspection

<b>Leadership and management</b>		<b>4</b>
Contributory grades:		
Equality of opportunity		4
Quality improvement		4

<b>Engineering and manufacturing technologies</b>		<b>3</b>
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
<b>Engineering</b>		
Apprenticeships for young people	24	3
NVQ training	10	3
Train to Gain	4	3
<b>Manufacturing technologies</b>		
Apprenticeships for young people	1	3
Train to Gain	5	3
<b>Transportation</b>		
Train to Gain	5	3

<b>Business administration and law</b>		<b>4</b>
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
<b>Administration</b>		
Apprenticeships for young people	18	4
Train to Gain	11	4
<b>Business management</b>		
Apprenticeships for young people	6	4
Train to Gain	17	4
<b>Customer service</b>		
Apprenticeships for young people	7	4
Train to Gain	15	4

Grades awarded at reinspection

<b>Leadership and management</b>		<b>3</b>
Contributory grades:		
Equality of opportunity		3
Quality improvement		3

<b>Engineering and manufacturing technologies</b>		<b>3</b>
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
<b>Engineering</b>		
Apprenticeships for young people	17	3
NVQ training	3	3
Train to Gain	3	3

<b><i>Manufacturing technologies</i></b>		
Apprenticeships for young people	1	3
Train to Gain	18	3

<b>Business administration and law</b>		<b>3</b>
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
<b><i>Administration</i></b>		
Apprenticeships for young people	19	3
Train to Gain	4	3
<b><i>Business management</i></b>		
Apprenticeships for young people	4	3
Train to Gain	1	3
<b><i>Customer service</i></b>		
Apprenticeships for young people	12	3
Train to Gain	2	3

## About the reinspection

6. The reinspection, of work-based learning for young people and of Train to Gain, was carried out in three phases, with a final phase of three inspectors over three days. The areas inspected included leadership and management, quality improvement, equality of opportunity, engineering and manufacturing technologies and business administration and law. The small contact centre provision was not included in the reinspection, but was taken into account when making judgements on leadership and management.

Number of inspectors	3
Number of inspection days	13
Number of learners interviewed	13
Number of staff interviews	16
Number of employers interviewed	14
Number of locations/sites/learning centres visited	11
Number of visits to the provider	3

## Leadership and management

**Grade: 3**

### Strengths

- Purposeful management to bring about improvement

### Weaknesses

- Ineffective implementation of some management and quality improvement systems
7. Leadership and management, judged to be inadequate at the previous inspection, are now satisfactory. Strategic planning is now more formal and co-ordination of the business plan, the development plan for training, the self-assessment report, and the quality improvement plan is much improved. The strategy for improvement is clear and targets are much improved, forming the basis for the newly introduced performance appraisal scheme, and effectively linking individual staff targets to corporate targets.
  8. The previous inspection identified that recent changes in management were starting to deal with immediate areas of concern. Since then, a new centre manager has been appointed by the board of directors to bring about change. Purposeful and effective management has promoted improvement. Substantial progress has been made with addressing each of the key challenges identified at the previous inspection. Internal communications have improved. Staff clearly understand their roles and responsibilities and work well as a team to improve the quality of provision. Managers have addressed staffing issues. The positive aspects of team meetings noted at the previous inspection continue. Monthly management meetings are now more focused on reviewing performance against targets.
  9. Management of the provision has improved since the previous inspection and is now satisfactory. Assessors are set clear targets to raise achievement and are fully accountable to the centre manager for learners' progress. The centre manager meets formally with each assessor at review meetings every six weeks. The number of learners still in learning at the end of their funded programme has significantly reduced. The recently introduced quality meetings, which take place twice a week, provide an effective forum for the centre manager and assessors to discuss all aspects of learners' experiences, and to agree the implementation of changes to the provision.
  10. A satisfactory skills for life strategy has been developed and implemented. The detailed strategy provides the basis for an increasingly sound approach to identifying learners' additional learning needs through initial and diagnostic assessment. Assessors are being trained to make effective use of the outcomes of assessments to improve training and learning.
  11. Kita improved its computer-based management information systems in early 2007. Key measures of success are available to senior managers and assessors, and some are discussed at performance management meetings. However, during the inspection, Kita was unable to provide up-to-date data on learners' overall and timely success rates. Such data in the self-assessment report does not match the data identified as correct by inspectors.

12. Many management and quality improvement systems are new, or substantially altered, and are not yet sufficiently or consistently applied. In particular, insufficient integrated planning of training takes place. Not enough workplace training is carried out and workplace supervisors are not fully involved in progress reviews. Target-setting and action-planning in progress reviews is not sufficiently clear. The development of training plans to cover theory work for business administration programmes is not clear and the development of learning materials is not carried out to a consistent standard. The monitoring of health and safety compliance in employers' premises is poorly managed. Annual checks have not been consistently executed. The centre manager has identified this and a programme of visits is now arranged to rectify it.

### **Equality of opportunity**

**Contributory grade: 3**

13. Equality of opportunity is now satisfactory. Since the previous inspection, a clear and well conceived plan for the improvement of provision in equality of opportunity has been implemented. Kita policies and procedures, including those for complaints, support and guidance to employers, the appropriateness of employers' equality and diversity policies, and the comprehensive monitoring of equality and diversity related data, are satisfactory, as identified at the previous inspection.
14. Equality of opportunity and diversity now has a much higher profile within Kita. Considerable work has been done to ensure implementation of a comprehensive infrastructure of equality of opportunity processes at strategic and operational levels. A new meetings structure gives staff greater opportunities to discuss their work, such as the promotion of equality and diversity with learners. Staff have attended formal training on equality and diversity. They have a better understanding of relevant issues and discuss these with colleagues.
15. An improved, up-to-date and well used equality of opportunity and diversity strategy provides a suitable context for assuring, promoting and monitoring equality and diversity. A range of equality of opportunity data is used to keep the strategy in line with current practice.
16. The promotion of equality of opportunity is now satisfactory. New approaches to progress reviews and assessment require assessors to discuss equality and diversity with learners, whose understanding of relevant issues is now improving. Some good use is made of learners' experiences to reinforce equality and diversity in relation to their work and studies. A useful folder, and some computer-based materials, of equal opportunities-related resources is available to assessors.
17. Access to Kita's building is not adequate for people with restricted mobility. Plans to move to purpose-built, compliant, training premises have further advanced since the previous inspection.

### **Quality improvement**

**Contributory grade: 3**

18. Quality improvement, judged to be inadequate at the previous inspection, is now satisfactory. Effective management has provided a clear improvement strategy and plan. Kita has comprehensively reviewed its strengths and weaknesses. The quality improvement plan is a sound document for recording actions and monitoring progress. All staff now fully understand and support actions for improvement. All of the key challenges identified at the previous inspection have been substantially addressed. Significantly, overall success rates have improved since the previous inspection and are largely at or above national averages.
19. A thorough review of existing quality improvement systems has taken place. The new quality management system provides a comprehensive source of reference and guidance for quality assurance processes. Work to improve quality, however, has not waited for its completion. For example, the centre manager has introduced more thorough management of assessors and of their targets.
20. A regular meeting takes place, attended by all staff, to discuss new quality improvement measures and to evaluate progress. This is a marked improvement on previous practice. Internal verification arrangements are satisfactory, as at the previous inspection.
21. Inspectors agreed with the judgement at the previous inspection that arrangements for self-assessment are generally satisfactory. It is an inclusive process and engages a sample of employers, through the board of directors. However, the report does not make sufficiently clear judgements about the quality of training and learning. The Kita scheme for the observation of training and learning is sufficiently established and it is too early to judge its effectiveness. Insufficient evidence is available on the quality of subcontractors' provision. Inspectors agreed with most of the judgements and grades in the report.

## Areas of learning

### Business administration and law

**Grade: 3**

Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
<b><i>Administration</i></b>		
Apprenticeships for young people	19	3
Train to Gain	4	3
<b><i>Business management</i></b>		
Apprenticeships for young people	4	3
Train to Gain	1	3
<b><i>Customer service</i></b>		
Apprenticeships for young people	12	3
Train to Gain	2	3

22. Some 42 learners are on administration, management/team leader and customer service programmes of whom 19 are advanced apprentices, 16 are apprentices and seven are on Train to Gain programmes. Most learners are employed in small and medium-sized companies, including voluntary and not-for-profit organisations. Kita recruits adult learners by visiting businesses that have requested a business needs analysis, and identifying a programme to meet the needs of the learner and the company. Some apprentices are recruited through repeat business. Assessors visit learners in the workplace.

#### Strengths

- Very good learner support
- Successful recent action to improve provision

#### Weaknesses

- Insufficient development of learners' background knowledge
- Insufficient development of learners' literacy and numeracy skills

#### Achievement and standards

23. Success rates have significantly improved since the previous inspection and overall success rates are now satisfactory. For the past three years, success rates for apprentices and advanced apprentices completing their full frameworks have shown an improving trend. Apprenticeship success rates have risen from 44% in 2004-05 to 67% in 2006-07. Advanced apprenticeship success rates have increased from 31% in 2004-05 to 57% in 2006-07. In administration in 2005-06, success rates for advanced apprentices are considerably better than for apprentices at 78% compared with 50%. Customer service success rates for 2005-06 were particularly low for advanced apprentices, at 33%. Learners' progress and timely success rates are now satisfactory. They develop appropriate skills and knowledge and portfolios are of a satisfactory standard.

#### The quality of provision

24. The quality of provision is satisfactory. Kita offers a satisfactory range of business administration, customer service and team leading programmes. Planning of support for learners was judged to be weak at the previous inspection. Learner support is now very good. Assessors make regular visits to workplaces. They work very well to match NVQs to learners' job roles, and to ensure optional modules are co-ordinated with their current work activities. Assessors develop very effective working relationships with learners, providing them with good advice on evidence collection and portfolio-building. Learners are able to contact assessors by telephone and email for advice and guidance between workplace visits. Assessors work well to motivate learners and help them progress. Monitoring of learners' progress is appropriately managed. However, target-setting on assessment action plans is not sufficiently precise.
25. In contrast to the previous inspection, involvement by employers in learners' programmes is satisfactory. For example, they have a better understanding of the apprenticeship frameworks and what learners are required to do to successfully complete them. Some employers provide satisfactory witness statements to verify learners' competence in carrying out particular job activities. Employers are much more effectively involved with assessors in reviewing learners' progress and in agreeing actions.
26. Induction is satisfactory. The recently written induction book helps learners understand their apprenticeship programme. The employment rights and responsibilities programme contains relevant information to increase learners' awareness of fundamental aspects of being an employee. However, tutors are not given sufficient guidance on how to effectively deliver this programme.
27. The overall development of learners' knowledge and skills has improved since the previous inspection. However, development of learners' background knowledge is insufficient. Although their learning styles are identified through a self-assessment questionnaire, the outcomes are not used well to plan and deliver individual training. Few targets on assessment action plans are specifically linked to background knowledge and understanding. Tutors generally rely on past test papers to monitor learners' development and understanding. However, resources for learners to prepare for key skills and technical certificate assessments have improved since the previous inspection and further materials are now being written.
28. Kita has introduced a clear skills for life strategy since the previous inspection. All learners complete an initial assessment. Managers and assessors are working to make better use of assessment outcomes in planning training and learning. Kita is working to increase the number of qualified skills for life tutors and to improve resources for independent study. However, improvement measures are taking too long to be fully implemented and not enough work is being done to improve learners' literacy and numeracy skills.

### **Leadership and management**

29. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Successful recent action, led by the centre manager, has improved the quality of apprenticeships and NVQ programmes. For example, regular meetings have been implemented to examine, improve and monitor the quality of provision. Staff feedback is regularly collected. Marketing of programmes to

employers is more effective. The recently revised internal verification system provides satisfactory arrangements for the systematic sampling of the assessment process and for reporting on the outcomes of verification. Observation of teaching and learning has been introduced but it is too early to judge its effectiveness. Insufficient use is made of the management information system to monitor learners' progress to ensure quality improvement.

30. The self-assessment report is detailed. Inspectors agreed with some of the strengths and weaknesses identified, but judged the report to be insufficiently evaluative. Assessors do not have sufficient opportunity to update their industrial and commercial experience or to work towards relevant teaching qualifications. Kita has identified this issue and aims to rectify it in 2007. Learners have a satisfactory understanding of equality of opportunity.

**Engineering and manufacturing technologies****Grade: 3**

<b>Contributory areas:</b>	<b>Number of learners</b>	<b>Contributory grade</b>
<b><i>Engineering</i></b>		
Apprenticeships for young people	17	3
NVQ training	3	3
Train to Gain	3	3
<b><i>Manufacturing technologies</i></b>		
Apprenticeships for young people	1	3
Train to Gain	18	3

31. Some 42 learners are on programmes in engineering maintenance, fabrication and welding, mechanical manufacturing engineering and performing manufacturing operations. Of these 10 are advanced apprentices, eight are apprentices and three are on other work-based learning. Twenty-one learners are on Train to Gain programmes. All advanced apprentices spend their first year at a subcontracted college working towards the performing engineering operations programme at level 2. All apprentices attend college on day release to complete a technical certificate and three key skills units. The other two key skills units are completed through assessment in the workplace. Employers manage the workplace training and Kita staff carry out all assessment and verification of NVQ work. Since appointment in February 2007, Kita's engineering assessor has worked towards qualifications in the assessment process. All of his assessment work is checked and signed by a member of Kita staff that is normally the internal verifier for engineering. An individual subcontractor, who recently retired from a full-time post with Kita, carries out internal verification.

**Strengths**

- Frequent and effective support visits to the workplace

**Weaknesses**

- Insufficient involvement of workplace supervisors

**Achievement and standards**

32. Overall success rates are satisfactory. For example, to date in 2006-07, success rates for advanced apprentices, NVQ learners and adults on Train to Gain programmes are currently 75%, 64% and 75% respectively. Recruitment to apprenticeships in the last two years has been low and there have been no framework completions. Timely success rates are low. Progress by advanced apprentices is slow and the timely success rate for 2005-06 was low at 7%. There are no achievements for those planned to complete in 2006-07. Current achievement rates for young people on NVQs and Train to Gain learners in 2006-07 are 40% and 42% respectively. Some of these learners are close to completion.

33. Learners have access to a satisfactory range of learning opportunities in the workplace and develop appropriate knowledge and practical skills. They develop appropriate knowledge and skills though working with skilled and supportive colleagues. Many learners move

around sections in the workplace to gain a full understanding of a range of production processes. Learners develop their skills well and become valued members of their employer's workforce.

### **The quality of provision**

34. The quality of provision is satisfactory. Learners' induction, and the initial assessment of their literacy and numeracy skills, remains satisfactory, as at the previous inspection. The assessor visits learners in the workplace on a regular basis to provide effective support and guidance to help learners progress. Progress reviews now take place every month and can take place more frequently and at short notice if required. Progress reviews focus well on monitoring individual progress against targets on action plans and providing guidance on what to do next. The assessor works well to improve learners' understanding of the NVQ process and develop effective working relationships with workplace staff. Emphasis is placed on the ongoing assessment of evidence as it is produced. Internal verification is satisfactory.
35. Workplace visits by the assessor generally involve an assessment of learners' understanding of health and safety. Questioning by the assessor is comprehensive and thorough and successfully reinforces work done by other staff. The assessment includes a tour of the workplace to identify fire evacuation procedures and the location of specific equipment such as extinguishers, storage of personal and protective equipment and of substances hazardous to health.
36. Satisfactory use is made of learners' workplace activity as evidence for the key skills of improving own learning and working with others. Some workplace managers understand these key skills requirements and are able to assist in the identification and assessment of evidence.
37. Involvement of workplace supervisors in the management of training, monitoring of progress and assessment is insufficient. Most workplace supervisors do not attend progress reviews. They are not present when the assessor identifies the action plans for learners and do not contribute to identifying specific work tasks for NVQ evidence. Although workplace supervisors are asked to provide a witness statement to endorse all performance evidence logs written by learners, they are not asked to make a value judgement on the knowledge and skills displayed by the learner in doing the task. Assessment of learner performance is generally only based on examination of their written log sheets. Insufficient assessment of learner performance by direct observation in the workplace is carried out. This was identified as a weakness at the previous inspection and is a key part of Kita's improvement action plan.

### **Leadership and management**

38. Leadership and management of provision are satisfactory. Staff meetings clearly identify actions to improve the engineering provision. These actions are directed specifically at developing faster progression by learners through more effective assessment methods and greater involvement of workplace supervisors.
39. Induction for the new assessor included a three week shadowing period with the previous assessor. His performance is currently monitored by specialist in-house staff who deliver the training and assessment awards. The externally contracted internal verifier has

recently carried out an examination of the portfolios of all engineering learners. The new assessor was provided with written feedback and some of this feedback has been effectively used to set appropriate action plans for learners. The internal verifier has not directly observed the performance of the assessor.

40. Use of fact sheets, questionnaires and task sheets during progress reviews is effective in raising learners' awareness and understanding of equality and diversity issues. However, this action has not been adequately extended to involve workplace supervisors. Some monitoring of equality of opportunity practices in the workplace is inadequate.

