



TRAINING STANDARDS COUNCIL

INSPECTION REPORT OCTOBER 1998

Action for Employment

SUMMARY

Training in manufacturing, foundation for work and retailing and customer service is good. Business administration training is satisfactory. Trainees and trainers enjoy excellent working relationships, which assist trainees in gaining their qualifications. However, trainees are unclear about their training programme, about units gained and short-term targets. The comprehensive appraisal system ensures that staff development is designed to meet the needs of the company and to assist the individual in achieving his/her ambitions. A strong culture of recognition and implementation of quality exists and is supported by staff at all levels. There are examples of ineffective communications between the training arm of the company and other departments. This adversely affects the efficiency of some recording systems such as training plans and the systematic use of entry testing.

GRADES

OCCUPATIONAL AREAS	GRADE
Manufacturing	2
Business administration	3
Retailing & customer service	2
Foundation for work	2

GENERIC AREAS	GRADE
Equal opportunities	3
Trainee support	2
Management of training	2
Quality assurance	2

KEY STRENGTHS

- ◆ excellent working relationships between tutors and trainees
- ◆ regular and frequent workplace visits
- ◆ equal opportunities issues systematically reviewed and addressed
- ◆ comprehensive quality assurance arrangements

KEY WEAKNESSES

- ◆ poor trainee understanding of programmes
- ◆ entry testing not systematic
- ◆ ineffective communication systems

INTRODUCTION

1. Action for Employment is a limited company, which was established in 1991. It evolved from the South Yorkshire Skills Training organisation. The company employs approximately 320 staff and has centres in Sheffield, Leeds, Doncaster, Nottingham, Derby, Newcastle, Scunthorpe, Goole, Grimsby, Wakefield, Exeter and East Devon and London. Training has been devolved to a specialist training department of the company, known as the UK College. The company's headquarters are at Attercliffe in Sheffield, in what was a steel factory, in the main industrial area of the city; this building provides purpose-built workshops for engineering.

2. Currently the provider has the following contracts with Barnsley and Doncaster, Leeds and Sheffield training and enterprise councils (TECs): it delivers work-based training for adults, including prevocational training, work-based training for young people, including careerships, national traineeships, and modern apprenticeships and a variety of New Deal contracts. At the time of inspection, there were 500 people in training. Trainees have a range of learning difficulties and/or disabilities ranging from moderate to severe and some are socially disadvantaged. Trainees work towards full national vocational qualifications (NVQs) at levels 1, 2 and 3, or must undertake at least one unit from an NVQ. Inspectors visited the centres at Doncaster, Leeds and Sheffield where the following programmes were inspected: manufacturing, business administration, retailing and foundation for work.

3. Most TEC-funded trainees live within south and west Yorkshire. The number of school leavers achieving five or more general certificates of secondary education (GCSEs) at grade C and above was 36 per cent, compared with the national average of 53 per cent, for 1997. The largest industrial sector in Sheffield is still engineering and the steel industry, and the biggest problem in this area is the lack of fully trained engineers. The fastest-growing industry in Leeds is customer query order centres; employment in this area has increased by 12 per cent over the past three years. Traditionally, employment in Doncaster is in skilled and semi-skilled work in mining and engineering, but they have been in decline for many years.

4. Unemployment in Leeds is low in comparison with the other two TEC areas in which the company operates. Unemployment in Leeds was 4.9 per cent this year, 7.2 per cent in Sheffield and high in Doncaster at 8.6 per cent. These compare with a national average of 5.1 per cent. In the three geographical areas inspected minority ethnic groups make up 5 per cent of the population.

INSPECTION FINDINGS

5. Action for Employment produced a self-assessment report during August and September 1998, with the support of Sheffield TEC. The business manager introduced the report at the company's head office. Staff are aware of the contents of the report which accurately identified some weaknesses. However, inspectors identified others. Many of the strengths in the self-assessment report were judged by inspectors to be no more than normal practice. Inspectors agreed with the grades proposed for retailing & customer service, foundation for work, trainee support, management of training and quality assurance, but awarded lower grades for all other areas.

6. A team of five inspectors spent a total of 25 days at the company's centres during October 1998. Inspectors met staff from the training centre, employers, and spoke with representatives from the TEC and government office. They interviewed 11 employers in the work placements, interviewed 58 trainees, met with 26 provider staff, visited 27 placements and observed 18 training sessions.

OCCUPATIONAL AREAS

Manufacturing

Grade 2

7. Action for Employment has 55 trainees in the manufacturing sector, with 47 trainees based at Sheffield and eight at Doncaster. Trainees follow the manufacturing, assembly and processing skills (MAPS) programme covering occupational areas, which include window manufacture, food processing and engineering. Forty-four of the trainees are employed. The company's training arm, UK College conducts training and assessment in the workplace. The remaining trainees take part in engineering training at the Sheffield centre's workshop, attending three days per week, with an average length of stay of approximately 16 weeks. During this period, efforts are made to secure employment for the trainees on completion of their training. In its self-assessment report, the company did not clearly identify all its strengths and weaknesses. Inspectors awarded a lower grade than proposed by the company.

STRENGTHS

- ◆ excellent working relationships among trainers, trainees and employers
- ◆ good-quality, supportive training delivered in engineering workshop
- ◆ visits to trainees in the workplace exceed contractual requirements
- ◆ high percentage of trainees are employed
- ◆ highly motivated trainees

WEAKNESSES

- ◆ lack of awareness by trainees in work placements of progress towards their qualification
- ◆ little understanding of MAPS and vocational qualifications by trainees and employers
- ◆ no copies of review documentation left with trainees or supervisors

8. Training within the engineering workshop is carried out to a high standard, tailored to trainees' individual needs and delivered by qualified, experienced and empathetic staff. This high level of support also extends to those trainees in work placements with frequent visits by trainers for both pastoral and assessment purposes. Time is allowed in the workplace for any theoretical training required. Assessment is carried out regularly in the workplace. Unit accreditation is recorded and trainees can readily see what they have achieved. Verbal feedback is provided in detail at assessment and when necessary, advice is given to help trainees improve their performance. Monitoring sheets are also used to record details of assessment feedback. Workplace supervisors deliver additional qualifications, such as health and safety. The MAPS qualification is used imaginatively with trainers ensuring that trainees are able, if necessary, to move to different departments within their company to ensure that all units of the MAPS award can be achieved. Where this is not possible, trainers will arrange off-the-job training at the centre for particular units. However, trainees are not sure of their progress towards achievement of their qualification and both trainees and employers are confused about the vocational qualification, assuming it is an NVQ specific to their industry. Other opportunities for trainees' progression are missed, as copies of the review documents are not left with either the trainee or work-based supervisor, but are kept in the trainees' files in the office. Ready access is, therefore, denied them. A high proportion of trainees is employed and excellent working relationships have been built up between the employers and trainers in all companies visited. The workshop facilities are adequate for the needs of the trainees, and cater for the broad-based, basic engineering training needed to gain the NVQ. Attainment levels for achievement of NVQs and jobs are satisfactory.

Business administration**Grade 3**

9. Action for Employment offers training in business administration at all three sites inspected. There are 92 trainees in training, 19 are adults, 43 modern apprentices, six are national trainees and 24 are on other youth programmes. Although Action for Employment tries to obtain work placements for all trainees, this is not always possible and a few trainees complete their NVQs in a simulated working environment in the training centre. Some strengths proposed in the self-assessment report were no more than normal practice or contractual compliance and some additional weaknesses were identified by inspectors. Therefore, the grade awarded by inspectors was lower than that proposed by the company.

STRENGTHS

- ◆ productive working relationships with trainees
- ◆ good progress on implementing key skills

WEAKNESSES

- ◆ staff responsibilities for trainees unclear
- ◆ assessment practice unevenly applied

10. Trainees are visited in the workplace every two to three weeks for progress review/ assessment and forward planning purposes. In-house trainees are reviewed and assessed either weekly or fortnightly. While the provider makes considerable efforts to ensure a realistic work experience for in-house trainees, this type of training does offer a less satisfactory experience than does a work placement. Internal assessment of some portfolios is superficial and lacking in rigour although in other cases, fully acceptable practice is implemented. Trainees' portfolios are well presented and maintained; work is of an excellent standard and individual witness statements are included. Trainees' work experience is enhanced, by carrying out a broader range of tasks than those solely related to achieving the NVQ award.

11. The same methods have not been used to explain the NVQ standards to trainees. In some instances, tutors cross-reference the evidence for assessment, so that trainees do not learn the significance of NVQ standards or how to use them. Consequently, their understanding of the standards varies considerably. Some have little or no knowledge of how their evidence of compliance relates to their NVQ criteria, while others are fully conversant and confident in this respect. There is no standardised system for addressing problems of trainees' understanding of cross-referencing for NVQ evidence. UK College is producing guidelines and standardised procedures to ensure that trainees all receive the same information at the same point in their programme. There is also some evidence that NVQ and non-NVQ related work is mingled together.

12. A few in-house trainees are unclear who is responsible for them in the absence of their usual tutor. Most of them seek advice and help from their fellow trainees rather than approaching busy members of staff. This particular group of trainees expresses varying levels of dissatisfaction with the programme, ranging from insufficient support from staff to inadequate opportunities for assessment. For a short time, staffing levels were inadequate owing to a tutor being on sick leave. There was no cover during this period. Many other trainees feel that training is good.

13. The staffing level in centres is a major contributing factor to trainees' degree of satisfaction with their programme. Achievement of NVQs is average for the sector and the rate of jobs gained is good, at 62.5 per cent. Good work has been done in the implementation of key skills. While staff recognise the importance of continual monitoring and development in this area, key skills are well integrated. Good use is made of workplace evidence of trainees' competence whenever possible.

**Retailing & customer service
(distributive and warehouse
operations)**

Grade 2

14. Action for Employment has 81 trainees working towards a variety of NVQs in this operational area, including retail operations at levels 2, 3 and 4, customer service at levels 2 and 3, and distribution and warehousing operations at level 1. The trainees are engaged in a range of programmes involving employers, where all trainees are being trained on the job. Fourteen trainees are modern apprentices, four are national trainees, 20 are engaged in careerships and 43 are on the work-based training for adults programme. Most on-the-job trainers are occupationally experienced but are not qualified as trainers. Assessments are carried out in the workplace by UK College tutors, who are both qualified and occupationally experienced. Inspectors confirmed many of the strengths listed in the self-assessment report and identified some additional strengths. The report was not realistic in recognising weaknesses in this area, however inspectors awarded the same grade as that proposed by Action for Employment.

STRENGTHS

- ◆ trainees' progress regularly monitored and reviewed
- ◆ supportive and productive working relationships between tutors and trainees
- ◆ strong work-based focus to training and assessment
- ◆ tutors make maximum use of all forms of assessment evidence
- ◆ good understanding of key skills by trainees

WEAKNESSES

- ◆ some poor assessment planning and feedback for retail trainees
- ◆ lack of qualifications by most workplace trainers
- ◆ lack of awareness of resources by trainees

15. The company maintains effective relationships with employers, both for employed and non-employed status trainees, and this provides a solid foundation for the supportive way in which trainees are tutored throughout their training programme. Overall, trainees are well supported by tutors and their progress is adequately documented. All trainees are satisfied that their training is practical and highly relevant to performing tasks at work. UK College tutors are responsible for carrying out workplace assessment and exhibit a thorough knowledge of the NVQs with which they are dealing. This enables them to cross-reference varied forms of assessment evidence, across many elements of an NVQ, in an effective manner. It also enables them to accredit prior learning efficiently, when trainees are either transferring from one NVQ to another, such as customer service to retail operations, or are taking another NVQ. Satisfactory resources aid trainees in the achievement of their NVQ. Rates of achievement are good for this sector. When trainees do leave

early, it is usually to go into employment. Trainees also have the opportunity to take other qualifications. The achievement of key skills by modern apprentices is developing along lines that allow integration and the use of common evidence identified in relevant NVQs. While it is acknowledged that there is more development envisaged, the basis of this approach is sound and is well received by trainees.

16. Assessment in the retail NVQ at level 2 is, at times, poorly planned, and is often strongly driven by the assessor. There are instances where trainees do not receive feedback following assessments by observation. The quality of on-the-job training carried out by some workplace trainers is varied and is dependent upon the commitment of the individual trainers, their ability, and support available to them in the form of learning material and company information. Where trainers are qualified, the organisation of training is good and learning support resources are often used to support underpinning knowledge development. The focus is on the provider's assessment and review process to drive achievement of the appropriate NVQ. In this process tutors do not always make trainees aware of all the resources which might assist them in their development.

Foundation for work

Grade 2

17. Action for Employment runs prevocational programmes at its Sheffield, Leeds and Doncaster sites. The 93 trainees are all unemployed; trainees are referred by the Employment Service and by other training agencies. Many trainees have learning difficulties and/or disabilities ranging from moderate to severe, and others have been socially disadvantaged. Trainees spend 12 weeks in-centre following programmes which combine wordpower, numberpower and profile of achievement units. They then have the option of a further four weeks on work placement. There are six staff delivering and assessing prevocational programmes. All either already have relevant training qualifications, or will be taking these later in the year. In addition, the company runs a recruit and train programme, in which clients are found employment, which includes a period of training. There are nine trainees on this programme. The strengths identified by Action for Employment during self-assessment were confirmed, but some were seen to represent no more than contractual compliance. Inspectors identified other strengths. The weaknesses claimed by the provider were confirmed. Other weaknesses were identified during inspection and inspectors awarded the same grade as that proposed in the self-assessment report.

STRENGTHS

- ◆ excellent tutor/trainee working relationships
- ◆ effective teamwork to support trainees
- ◆ individually tailored programmes
- ◆ innovative teaching methods
- ◆ supportive relationships between trainees

WEAKNESSES

- ◆ some inappropriate work placements
- ◆ poor understanding of programme by trainees
- ◆ no system for sharing good practice

18. Prevocational trainees spend a few days in the centre to familiarise themselves with the programme and to build their confidence. They then have an in-depth assessment interview with a tutor, during which they decide which units they will cover during their training. Trainees are enthusiastic about their programme, which helps them to develop skills, particularly those concerned with literacy, which they see as valuable, as well as increasing their self-esteem. However, although proud of their achievement, some trainees on both the prevocational and the recruit and train programme are unclear about which units they are actually covering, or what progress they have made.

19. Relationships between tutors and trainees are excellent. Tutors acknowledge and recognise trainees' individual difficulties, and work effectively as a team to help them to achieve their potential. The support offered extends beyond the training environment to include personal issues. For example, if trainees are unable to attend the centre because of illness, but are reluctant to interrupt their learning programme, tutors will take training material to them at home. The atmosphere during training sessions is relaxed yet purposeful. Trainees are encouraged to be mutually supportive, to recognise their own strengths and to use these to help others in the group. In the Sheffield centre, a 'buddy' system is used, in which new trainees are mentored by someone who has been on the programme for a number of weeks. This develops positive relationships within the group, and trainees' accepting and non-judgemental attitudes towards each other are evident on all sites. Trainers are often innovative in their approach. Techniques used include the organisation of fashion shows and of concerts, and the making of a 'help wall', on which the contact numbers of various referral agencies are displayed. However, although training methods are sometimes discussed informally across the three centres, there is no formal mechanism in place for the systematic sharing of ideas, or for the discussion of good practice between sites.

20. After 12 weeks in-centre where resources are generally good, trainees are entitled to a four-week work placement with an employer in an occupationally relevant field. Although trainees are not forced into this, they are encouraged to take up the option and placement officers spend time discussing their needs and searching for appropriate placements. At times, this strategy works well and placements lead to employment. On some occasions, however, the work experience selected is inappropriate, reflecting unrealistic career ambitions, and trainees are either rejected at interview or unable to succeed in the placement. Employment is an integral part of the recruit and train programme, with a training aim, usually one or more NVQ units identified, to provide 'added value'. There is scope for trainees to extend their programme so that a full NVQ can be completed. In some cases, however, employers are reluctant to support an extension to the training, and this opportunity is lost.

GENERIC AREAS

Equal opportunities

Grade 3

21. Action for Employment has a clearly written and comprehensive equal opportunities policy, which forms an integral part of the induction process for both staff and trainees. Employers who do not have their own stated policy are required to work within this framework before they can be used for trainee placements. The company's commitment to equal opportunities is demonstrated within marketing materials and recruitment policies, offering equality of opportunity for all applicants, while trainers have a duty to ensure that trainees at work are not subject to discrimination of any form. There is a grievance procedure for staff and trainees designed to provide an effective and practical method for investigating and remedying any complaints. Approximately 4 per cent of the total number of trainees within the three geographic areas inspected were from minority ethnic groups compared to the overall community figure of 5 per cent, while 14 per cent of those in training are described as people with disabilities. Inspectors awarded a lower grade than was proposed by the company in its self-assessment report.

STRENGTHS

- ◆ systematic review and action-planning for equal opportunities issues
- ◆ active marketing aimed at minority groups
- ◆ successful recruitment of trainees with disabilities

WEAKNESSES

- ◆ marketing material does not always promote positive equal opportunities images
- ◆ potentially gender-offensive material displayed in some work areas
- ◆ no wheelchair access at one site

22. The equal opportunities policy is reviewed and updated annually. As part of this process Action for Employment collaborates with local TECs and other organisations on various projects and working groups concerned with the promotion of equality of opportunity for the local community. Staff are encouraged to take part in training in this area. Performance indicators are reviewed and an action plan put into place to target the recruitment of particular under-represented groups both by group and/or geographic area. The company takes part in the riding for the disabled initiative in Leeds and takes the opportunity to recruit trainees with disabilities. It has a significant number of trainees with disabilities in training. Equality of opportunity is also demonstrated by the large training provision for those in need of additional training support in terms of their abilities and/or social backgrounds. While some marketing materials contain positive equal opportunity images, other materials do not promote this image in any recognisable way, using simply a short statement. Some materials do not show positive gender images, but there are some women on programmes, which historically are male dominated. In some workshops, calendars and posters are displayed which contravene the company's equal

opportunities policy. Access at the Bessemer Road centre for wheelchair-users is limited as there is no lift to the first floor.

Trainee support

Grade 2

23. Trainees are referred to Action for Employment from several sources and also make contact as a result of advertising. All trainees receive initial help with job placement and advice on training requirements. Good vocational guidance is routinely offered to trainees. There is also a full induction programme covering their rights and responsibilities as well as an introduction to the NVQ process. Induction thoroughly covers health and safety, equal opportunities and identifies all support systems available to trainees. During induction, trainees are also given contact numbers to use in the event of any problems. Trainees clearly remember the details of the induction programme. Support for trainees includes the initial job placement service provided by Action for Employment, as well as tutorial and some pastoral support. Pastoral support is particularly good in the prevocational area. All trainees are individually interviewed and receive a sound induction programme. Although some of the strengths identified by the provider are no more than normal practice, others were identified by inspectors and the grade awarded is the same as that in the self-assessment report.

STRENGTHS

- ◆ comprehensive induction programme
- ◆ good counselling referral system for prevocational training

WEAKNESSES

- ◆ unsystematic assessment of additional learning needs
- ◆ no systematic recording of trainee support

24. The attitude and approach of all staff clearly demonstrates a commitment to supporting trainees and helping them to succeed. Managers are clear about their responsibilities to trainees. Visits for progress review and assessment are more frequent than contractually required. Dates for visits are planned well ahead and include discussions with the employer or supervisor. There is also a designated time for trainees to discuss confidential matters with visiting staff.

25. One centre has a particularly good approach to referring trainees in need of skilled counselling services. Trainees are involved in gathering information on local counselling services and information is displayed in the centre for any trainee to access if required. A second centre has a member of staff qualified to offer counselling in some areas

26. In some occupational areas there is no formal entry testing of basic and key skills, while trainees who are entering the business administration programme in Leeds are asked to complete a pre-entry test designed by Action for Employment.

However, the test has not been fully validated and is used together with the interview, making it a rather unsystematic process. Those who are felt to have specific literacy or numeracy difficulties are advised about prevocational training to improve their levels of basic skills and confidence. Where this need is identified, trainees complete a basic skills test to establish their level of entry. The support trainees receive is not always fully or systematically documented. Thus, it cannot be regularly reviewed to ensure that action is appropriate, and neither can the effectiveness of the support be properly evaluated. Staff do not have guidelines for identifying the most suitable match between trainees and placements. Feedback from assessment is given verbally to trainees and includes guidance on how to improve their performance.

Management of training

Grade 2

27. Action for Employment has a tiered management structure. Recruitment, interviewing and the administration of contracts and programmes are centre-based, while delivery of training and assessment is devolved to the company's training arm, the UK College. Since this system was adopted four years ago, NVQ achievements have increased from 189 in 1995-96 to 735 in 1997-98. The company has recently been re-awarded the Investors in People Standard. Appraisal includes career and performance reviews, which are held every six months and can be more frequent at the request of the individual employee. Staff development is linked to this process. The strengths identified in the self-assessment report were confirmed during inspection, but some were seen as no more than compliance with contract. Other strengths were identified. The weakness identified by Action for Employment, was confirmed and inspectors identified additional weaknesses. Inspectors awarded the same grade as proposed by the company.

STRENGTHS

- ◆ comprehensive appraisal system
- ◆ effective staff development
- ◆ targets used to improve performance

WEAKNESSES

- ◆ lack of effective communication systems between the company and its training arm

28. Staff support the company's mission and philosophy. Relationships between staff are relaxed and informal, and they work effectively together towards a shared purpose. Staff are clear about their rôles within the organisation and understand the lines of accountability. There is a comprehensive system for appraisal, comprising biannual performance reviews when staff development needs are identified. Employees are given access to a range of courses. Most are encouraged to take NVQs in a relevant occupational area and management training is available to those

who express an interest in it. A number of the staff who currently occupy management rôles within the company have been mentored to develop their skills and encouraged to apply for promotion, which they have subsequently achieved. Staff are set targets both for personal development and to meet business needs, on a regular basis. These are flexible and achievable, and are regarded positively as something which helps them to direct their efforts and improve their performance. The management information-system tracks the achievement of NVQs. Managers' targets are discussed at weekly meetings.

29. The company uses a range of systems for communicating information among employees. A formal contract compliance meeting is held monthly. This is supplemented by less formal centre and team meetings and by memos and newsletters. During these meetings, programmes are regularly reviewed to ensure that trainees' needs are being met. UK College tutors do not attend these team meetings, they attend separate meetings, internal verification sessions and workshops. Additionally, staff have the opportunity to express their views, both to their line managers, and to company directors. Their ideas and suggestions are circulated in a newsletter. The UK College manager has developed information packs for the centre staff responsible for recruitment and initial interviewing, so that they have a clearer understanding of programmes and are able to guide potential trainees more effectively. The College has also designated named staff to be the contact for each centre. Management of on- and off-the-job training is effectively done. Communication between sites is not always effective. The geographical distances involved make communication between centres problematic, and exchange of information and sharing of good practice is not always efficient. An e-mail link has been set up to improve communication across sites. However, it is too early to judge how effective this will be.

Quality assurance

Grade 2

30. Action For Employment's framework for quality assurance meets the quality standards applicable to the TECs with which it contracts. The company also consistently meets awarding body requirements. Staff understand and implement the quality assurance system and there is the basis of a communication network in place for consultation and feedback. Feedback about the quality of operations is sought from staff, trainees and employers. However, the analysis and evaluation of this feedback is at times insufficient to contribute comprehensively to continuous improvement. The self-assessment report was realistic in its judgements of this area and although some additional strengths have been identified, the proposed grade was confirmed by inspectors.

STRENGTHS

- ◆ quality assurance systems and procedures are well documented, understood and reviewed
- ◆ a strong culture of quality assurance permeates the company
- ◆ valuable customer feedback is obtained through telemarketing
- ◆ good internal verification system

WEAKNESSES

- ◆ inconsistent completion of individual training plans in some occupational areas
- ◆ incomplete analysis and evaluation of customer feedback
- ◆ insufficient analysis of leavers and destination data

GOOD PRACTICE

In the prevocational training programme, trainees met fortnightly with their tutor to review the group's issues and concerns. Time is allocated to each trainee to express individual or other matters. A trainee takes the minutes and the tutor is responsible for acting on points raised. On one occasion, a trainee suggested that they might be able to wear name badges when in group training sessions, to facilitate identification and improve communication within the group. The tutor agreed to arrange name badges for trainees.

31. The company's quality assurance arrangements are comprehensive and have strength in their common sense approach and user-friendly application. The level of understanding of the quality assurance system among staff is high which, coupled with strong staff commitment, produces a sound operational base for procedures. The quality assurance system and arrangements are managed effectively by the company's quality manager, who also actively promotes and seeks to improve awareness of quality assurance issues among staff. The introduction of telemarketing has been valuable in, not only researching employment opportunities for the unemployed, but also in receiving useful feedback from employers, which is acted on by management. The internal verification sampling process is good. Both internal verifiers and assessors thoroughly understand and properly carry out their roles.

32. In some occupational areas, the completion of individual training plans is variable. There are examples of considerable over-descriptive detail, further sections which remain incomplete, and other sections which have poor evaluative statements. Overall, the quality and individuality of the training plan are not adequately monitored through the quality assurance system. Inconsistencies in training quality or practice are not always fully identified or effectively evaluated at centre level. While revised customer feedback forms are now in place, the tasks of analysis and evaluation remain. Similarly, a revised exit programme for trainees is in place, but the analysis and evaluation of this programme has yet to be carried out.