



TRAINING STANDARDS COUNCIL

INSPECTION REPORT DECEMBER 1999

Beverley College

SUMMARY

Beverley College provides good business administration and satisfactory engineering and hairdressing training. Most training is well planned by experienced and qualified staff. On- and off-the-job resources for training and assessment are good. Achievement rates in engineering are poor but improving. Achievement rates in hairdressing are poor. Trainees miss opportunities in the workplace to have their development of skills recorded for qualification purposes. Trainees have access to comprehensive additional facilities to support their learning. Effective advice is available on job opportunities and additional qualifications. Some trainees do not have an initial assessment to identify their need for support. Inadequate checks are made to ensure that trainees receive a structured and systematic work-based induction. All college staff have undertaken equal opportunities training. Positive action is being taken to redress gender imbalances in some occupational areas. The effectiveness of equal opportunities arrangements in the workplace is not adequately checked. Standards in off-the-job teaching are thoroughly monitored, and appropriate staff development is recommended to improve poor performance. Internal responsibilities and accountabilities are clear. However, employers and workplace providers do not fully understand and are not fully aware of key college procedures and policies. Quality assurance arrangements are comprehensive. Self-assessment is improving the standard of training. Data are not used effectively to maintain and monitor continuous improvements in the quality of training.

GRADES

OCCUPATIONAL AREAS	GRADE
Engineering	3
Business administration	2
Hair & beauty	3

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

KEY STRENGTHS

- ◆ well planned on- and off-the-job training
- ◆ imaginative development of key skills in business administration
- ◆ good engineering training and resources for assessment
- ◆ highly qualified and experienced hairdressing staff in the college and workplace
- ◆ effective support and advice for trainees on training and employment
- ◆ comprehensive arrangements for additional learning support in the college
- ◆ well-planned staff training in equal opportunities
- ◆ positive action to redress gender imbalances among trainees
- ◆ clear internal accountabilities and communications
- ◆ effective self-assessment
- ◆ comprehensive quality assurance arrangements



KEY WEAKNESSES

- ◆ missed opportunities for gathering evidence in the workplace
- ◆ poor achievement rates in engineering and hairdressing
- ◆ no initial assessment of some trainees
- ◆ poor monitoring of induction in the workplace
- ◆ weak understanding by employers of college's equal opportunities arrangements
- ◆ poor understanding of some training policies in the workplace
- ◆ under-use of management information system
- ◆ failure adequately to involve employers in quality assurance process

INTRODUCTION

1. Beverley College is a general college of further education. The college is based in the centre of Beverley, east Yorkshire. The college has a student and trainee catchment area of approximately 1,000 square miles. The area has a population of approximately 350,000 and 96 per cent of east Yorkshire's land area is in agricultural use. The college has been providing government-funded work-based training since 1995. It has training contracts with Humberside Training and Enterprise Council (TEC) for providing modern apprenticeships, national traineeships and youth training. Locally, youth training is known as "NVQ way ahead".

2. Beverley College operates from three east Yorkshire sites in Beverley, Hornsea and Hull. It also has two Home Office education and training contracts for the prison service at Full Sutton and Wakefield prisons. The college employs 50 teaching, 21 learning support and 45 administrative and other support staff. The director of business development and external services, who is one of the college's four directors, manages the TEC-funded training programmes. All work-based training for national vocational qualifications (NVQs) and the New Deal is co-ordinated and managed on a day-to-day basis by a team of three people. The NVQ and New Deal unit team includes a training manager, a work placement coordinator and a clerk typist. Their role is to find and secure appropriate work placements, manage the TEC contracts, identify trainees' support needs, organise training and support in the college and review the progress of trainees and New Deal clients towards their qualifications.

3. Beverley College has recently contracted with Humberside TEC to provide training for the full-time education and training option of New Deal. There are nine New Deal clients on this option attending college for 30 hours each week. There are another two clients subcontracted to the college for off-the-job training for the employment and environment task force options of New Deal. The clients on the full-time education and training option undertake vocational training, job preparation and key skills training. The work experience aspect of the full-time education and training option is organised by the training section and each client undertakes 20 days' work experience either on a day-release or block-release basis. New Deal clients are advised, like all other full time college applicants, by the college's client services. Any additional arrangements for learning support are established and planned at this stage and clients are then integrated directly into mainstream college courses. Wherever possible, work experience is linked to the vocational training programme and clients are encouraged to gather information and evidence for their qualifications while at work. Clients are currently working in the following occupational areas:

Table 1: New Deal clients by option and occupational area

	Hair & beauty	Hospitality	Engineering	Childcare	Business administration	Total
FTET	1	2	1	3	2	9
Employment				1		1
ETF					1	1
Total	1	2	1	4	3	11

4. The college has 99 trainees. The table below shows the breakdown by type of training programme and occupational area. Eighty-two different local and regional companies provide employment or work experience for the 99 work-based trainees and 11 New Deal clients. All modern apprentices are employed, as are 21 of the national trainees and 15 of those on other youth training programmes. The college subcontracts training in intensive crop cultivation, meat processing and meat and poultry manufacturing to another local college. There are four trainees currently attending this other college for these elements of their training.

Table 2: breakdown of trainees by occupational area and type of training

	Modern apprentices NVQ level 3	National trainees NVQ level 2	Other youth training NVQ level 2	Total
Agriculture	0	1	0	1
Engineering	16	7	11	34
Manufacturing	3	0	0	3
Business administration	10	7	0	17
Hospitality	2	5	2	9
Hair & beauty	3	3	0	6
Health, care & public services	18 (care)	5 (care)	2 (care)	25
	4 (childcare)	0 (childcare)	0 (childcare)	4
Total	56	28	15	99

5. Unemployment in the area is 8.7 per cent, against a national average of 5.2 per cent. Over 30 per cent of all unemployed people in the Hull area are under 25 years old and 21 per cent have been unemployed for over a year. Most local employment is with small to medium-sized enterprises. The larger regional employers are within the petro-chemical, food processing, telecommunication and aerospace industries.

Thirty-two per cent of all jobs are in public administration, education and health, and 21 per cent of jobs are in manufacturing.

6. The Hull area has a low achievement rate in the general certificate of secondary education (GCSE) with 10 per cent of school leavers in 1999 having no graded GCSE results. In 1999, the percentage of school leavers in Hull achieving five or more GCSE passes at grade C and above was 23.4 per cent, well below the national average of 47.9 per cent. Twenty-four per cent of school leavers progress to further education and over 12 per cent become unemployed. One third of the employed workforce has no vocational qualification. A quarter of the Hull population aged over 16 is in receipt of income support.

7. Minority ethnic groups make up only 1.3 per cent of the population of the Hull area. There is evidence that the number of residents formerly from eastern Europe is growing, with increasing numbers from the Croatian community. Minority ethnic groups make up less than 1 per cent of the population in the college's immediate catchment area.

INSPECTION FINDINGS

8. The director of business development and external services completed the college's self-assessment report in August 1999. Humberside TEC supported the self-assessment process through direct contact with him and by providing training workshops. The self-assessment toolkit was used to form judgments about the quality of training and an action plan was produced. All proposed grades within the report were realistic. Each section of the report included strengths and weaknesses and the report identified action required for improvement. The report clearly cross-referenced portfolio and non-portfolio evidence for each strength and weakness. The college made other relevant documents available throughout the inspection.

9. Inspection was carried out by a team of six inspectors for a total of 23 days. They inspected the training provided in engineering, business administration, and hair and beauty. The other occupational areas were not inspected as they each had fewer than 10 trainees at the time the inspection was arranged. Inspectors examined assessment procedures, subcontracting agreements, trainees' files and portfolios, staff qualifications, and quality and management arrangements. They interviewed 24 employers, 36 college tutors and managers, and 26 trainees. Inspectors visited 22 work placements and observed 12 lessons. The grades awarded to these sessions are shown below.

Table 3: grades awarded to instruction sessions

	GRADE 1	GRADE 2	GRADE 3	GRADE 4	GRADE 5	TOTAL
Engineering		1	1			2
Business administration		4		3		7
Hair & beauty		2	1			3
Total	0	7	2	3	0	12

OCCUPATIONAL AREAS

Engineering

Grade 3

10. There are 34 trainees, of whom 27 are motor vehicle trainees and seven production engineers. Two of the production trainees are maintenance engineers, and the other five are fabrication engineers. There are 16 modern apprentices, seven national trainees and 11 trainees on other youth training programmes. In motor vehicle engineering, there are two trainees working towards NVQs at level 1, 16 working towards NVQs at level 2, and nine working towards NVQs at level 3. In production engineering, there are four trainees working towards NVQs at level 2 and three working towards NVQs at level 3. Practical training takes place in the college and in the workplace. All trainees attend college for one day each week during term time. While at college, they develop their theoretical knowledge of the

subject and their practical skills. College staff visit trainees in the workplace every six to eight weeks to review their general support needs and the progress they are making towards their qualifications. Twenty-four of the 34 trainees are employed, and trainees are either employed or receive work experience within 30 different companies. College assessors carry out all the assessments of motor vehicle trainees in the workplace. Engineering trainees working towards level 2 NVQs are assessed in the college by a college assessor. Those working towards level 3 NVQs are assessed in the workplace by trained work-based assessors. Retention rates have been low and averaged 50 per cent between 1996 and 1998. Retention rates showed an increase in 1998-99, rising to over 80 per cent. Recruitment rates have been fairly constant over the last four years averaging seven new production trainees and 28 new motor vehicle trainees each year. The self-assessment report cited a number of strengths which were judged by inspectors to be no more than normal practice and highlighted different weaknesses to those identified by inspectors. Inspectors awarded a lower grade than that given in the self-assessment report.

STRENGTHS

- ◆ good on- and off-the-job training and assessment resources
- ◆ rigorous monitoring of trainees' progress
- ◆ well-planned on- and off-the-job training

WEAKNESSES

- ◆ no routine use of workplace evidence for qualification purposes
- ◆ poor achievement rates

11. Resources for learning, training and assessment in the college are good. The engineering technology centre, which contains motor vehicle, mechanical and fabrication and welding workshops, was refurbished in August 1999. The layout of the centre is well planned and there is a wide range of equipment. Resources in most workplaces are also good, enabling trainees to gain the appropriate experience and develop their skills on modern equipment. Trainees working towards level 1 and level 2 NVQs construct a kit car while in college. Trainees speak enthusiastically about the project. This particular approach to training helps to maintain trainees' motivation.

12. Tutors rigorously monitor trainees' progress. The cycle of monitoring begins for each trainee when their individual training plan has been completed. A copy of the plan is given to the trainee and to their tutor, and another is put into the trainee's file. Tutors review trainees' progress every six to eight weeks, in line with the requirements specified in the contract with Humberside TEC. An assessment plan is drawn up for each trainee before they are visited at work. The plan includes progress review dates and the target completion date. At each review the tutor completes a review sheet and an action plan. Good review procedures and systems

are in place, but tutors often fail to record sufficient detail about trainees' progress on the review and action plan documents. On average, only 70 per cent of trainees' progress reviews are completed every six to eight weeks.

13. The NVQ manager holds team meetings approximately every 12 weeks. Assessors, course tutors and the director of business and external services regularly attend the meetings. The training co-ordinator reminds assessors and tutors of trainees' completion and assessment dates. Any issues about a trainee's progress are raised and remedial action is taken. This may take the form of extra visits to the workplace or interviews with the trainee and/or their employer, the outcomes of which are fed back to the training co-ordinator.

14. On- and off-the-job training and assessments are well planned. Schemes of work and weekly lesson plans are in use but tutors' records of the work covered in previous lessons are not always completed. Tutors employ a variety of practical workshop and classroom training methods. Trainees understand the NVQ requirements, what is expected of them and their role and responsibilities. Trainees understand the important link between the work they do at college and the jobs they undertake at work. Workplace assessors help to maintain this link by completing a form which details the learning objectives which should be completed by trainees at college. Where possible, the assessor then arranges for the competencies to be reinforced in the workplace. However, the occupational and key skills which trainees develop at work and which they demonstrate outside their periodic, formal assessments, are not routinely assessed or recorded. This means that a great deal of naturally occurring workplace evidence is missed, and is not used to help trainees achieve their qualifications.

15. Key skills in information technology are taught and assessed during a four day training session. Other key skill requirements are included in off-the-job training and assessed when trainees complete a series of course work assignments. Lesson plans make few references to key skills, however. The plans do not clearly indicate where key skills are to be integrated into a lesson or where trainees can collect evidence of their key skills. Key skills are not well integrated with the training which is provided in the workplace. Documents resulting from the reviews and observation of trainees in the workplace do not refer to key skills. Workplace assessments do not take account of key skills demonstrated at work.

16. Achievement rates have been poor for the three years up to 1998 and have averaged 40 per cent. Achievements rates have improved however, since the college improved the monitoring of trainees' progress. Over 75 per cent of trainees who started a level 2 NVQ in 1998 are currently on target to achieve the qualification. Retention rates are also steadily improving. Table 4 below shows how retention and achievement rates have improved over the last three years.

Table 4: retention and achievement rates in engineering

(All NVQ levels)	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99
Retention rates (per cent)	44	50	80
Achievement rates (per cent)	30	40	Not available

17. Some employers are not involved with the training programme, being content to leave all aspects of training to the college. Trainees and employers are unclear about the content of trainees' individual training plans. Most motor vehicle trainees are on work placement with, or are employed by, small garages, often located in semi-rural locations. The working environments in some of the garages is poor.

18. Three internal verification systems are in operation. These include a system which the college has devised, the awarding body's procedures which apply to engineering trainees, and a further system for motor vehicle trainees. The internal verification process is satisfactory.

Business administration

Grade 2

19. The college offers a range of business-related qualifications, which include NVQs in business administration, accounting, information technology, and management, as well as a variety of diplomas and certificates in business, the use of computers, and word processing. All these qualifications, with the exception of the NVQs in administration and accounting, fall outside the remit of this inspection. There are 10 trainees registered on modern apprenticeships, of whom five are studying administration at NVQ level 3, and five are studying accounting at NVQ level 4. A further six national trainees are working towards NVQs at level 2 in administration, and one is working towards an NVQ at level 2 in accounting. Some trainees are in full- or part-time employment, and others are unemployed. The unemployed trainees are given work placements with a wide range of local employers which include public sector organisations, a national retail chain and an aerospace engineering company. Trainees receive off-the-job training at the college. Occupationally qualified peripatetic staff based at the Beverley site carry out workplace assessment. Specialist staff at the college teach skills as part of the trainees' day-release programme. Most staff are qualified assessors and all are qualified and experienced teachers. The self-assessment report accurately identified most of the strengths and weaknesses in the training. However, inspectors identified additional strengths and weaknesses. Inspectors awarded the same grade as that which the college gave in its self-assessment report.

STRENGTHS

- ◆ well-structured on- and off-the-job training and assessment in administration
- ◆ imaginative support for trainees' key skills development

- ◆ availability of additional qualifications
- ◆ good integration of key skills with some occupational programmes

WEAKNESSES

- ◆ missed opportunities in accountancy programme for gathering workplace evidence
- ◆ inappropriate classroom for accountancy training

GOOD PRACTICE

The college's training staff make imaginative use of additional opportunities for trainees to produce evidence of key skills. For example, trainees and staff meet each month to discuss issues such as access to assessment and individuals' progress and problems. These meetings are minuted and also recorded as observations to provide evidence of trainees' competence in communication key skills.

20. The administration programme is well planned and has clear learning and assessment targets. The targets are cross-referenced against the NVQ standards and up-dated on a weekly basis for each group. Trainees receive an individual evaluation to establish their experience and existing skills. Their basic skills are tested and if they require additional help, this is included in their personal action plans. The action plans cover both off-the-job training and workplace assessment. Specific elements from the NVQ are identified for assessment in the workplace. This enables trainees to plan their work in order to satisfy their own assessment targets. All trainees receive regular workplace visits from their assessor every six to eight weeks. The visits cover assessment of the evidence they have produced, observation of their competencies, questioning, identification of their progress, and any further action which may be required before the next assessment visit. Assessments are clearly recorded and assessors make a note of the trainees' achievements in the trainees' portfolios. The reviews are well planned and professionally managed. Employers and trainees keep a record of action points on which they have agreed and sign the progress review document. A copy of this document is given to the college tutors to ensure that the outcomes of reviews and assessments in the workplace contribute to the content of off-the-job training. Trainees are clear about the purpose of the visits and value the contact with the assessors. Satisfactory internal verification arrangements are in use to ensure the accuracy and consistency of all assessments.

21. Wherever possible, the review process identifies opportunities for collecting evidence of key skills. The trainees' workplace is regarded as the main source of evidence of key skills, except for those key skills which can be more effectively organised and assessed at the college. There is effective coaching of key skills. To support trainees in their learning and understanding of key skills, and to improve the quality of the evidence collected by trainees, the administration training team has developed workbooks containing key skills exercises at the appropriate level. The workbooks are set within a business context. They represent current working practices and clearly link to the requirements of the key skills qualification. Off-the-job vocational training also clearly identifies and records key skills activity for assessment purposes.

22. Retention rates for both administration and accounting are good, and retention rates have shown continuous improvement over the last three years. Of those trainees who started training in this occupational area in 1995-96, 62 per cent completed their programmes and 60 per cent achieved their qualifications. Of those

who started in 1997-98, 66 per cent completed their programmes and 64 per cent achieved their qualifications. These rates are higher than the TEC average for this occupational area.

23. Most of the trainees are encouraged to achieve additional qualifications during their NVQ programmes. These include qualifications in basic health and safety at work, word processing, audio typing, and use of computers. These qualifications add value to the programme and enhance the trainees' employment opportunities. The college encourages employers to gain access to health and safety training by offering this free of charge.

24. The college relies on peripatetic assessors. Some employers have their own accredited NVQ assessors in the workplace and others have expressed a willingness to become assessors. The college has not exploited these opportunities to include employers and existing qualified employees in the assessment process.

25. Inspectors identified a number of weaknesses in the accounting NVQ programme. A lack of clarity in the assessment of key skills, particularly in gathering evidence and in identifying opportunities for the assessment of key skills in the workplace, has caused confusion for modern apprentices and national trainees in accountancy.

26. Tutors make little use of additional materials to support trainees in their NVQ in accounting. Instead, they rely heavily on classroom exercises produced by the awarding body. Progress reviews for these awards do not focus on activities carried out in the workplace. Competencies which trainees gain at work are not accredited towards the NVQ or key skills requirements.

27. The base room for the trainees on the business administration programme has recently been refurbished and now has sufficient computers for all trainees. These are adequate for trainees to develop their information technology and office-based skills in the vocational programmes. However, the classroom used for the accounting NVQ is very small and lacks appropriate computers or learning resources.

Hair and beauty

Grade 3

28. There are six trainees on hairdressing programmes. All trainees are employed and work in a variety of hairdressing salons in the locality. Of the six trainees, three are modern apprentices and three are national trainees. Trainees are recruited either through direct contact with a hairdressing salon, through referral from the careers service or through direct marketing by the college.

29. All trainees attend college for off-the-job training and assessment one day a week. This training is supplemented by training and assessment opportunities in the workplace. College staff visit trainees every six weeks in order to review their

progress and to produce an action plan. The review process involves the salon staff. The college employs two part-time trainers and assessors. They undertake all the tuition in the college and all on-the-job reviews and assessments. Both tutors have excellent vocational qualifications and commercial experience. They are both registered assessors for the hairdressing awards.

30. Table 5 below shows details of the recruitment, retention and achievements of hairdressing trainees over the last three years. Of the 21 trainees leaving the programme early during the last three years, four have transferred to other full-time college courses.

Table 5: recruitment, retention and achievement of hairdressing trainees

	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000
Recruitment numbers	5	12	9	7
Retention rates	20%	33%	34%	43%
Achievement rates	20%	17%	11%	unavailable

31. The self-assessment report did not accurately identify the strengths within the hairdressing department. Inspectors agreed with the weaknesses identified in the self-assessment report. They identified additional weaknesses, one of which was given as a strength in the self-assessment report. Inspectors awarded a lower grade than that given in the self-assessment report.

STRENGTHS

- ◆ good on- and off-the-job tuition and assessment
- ◆ good level of trainees' occupational competence
- ◆ highly qualified and experienced college and workplace staff

WEAKNESSES

- ◆ poor use of resources for key skills training
- ◆ poor co-ordination of on- and off-the-job training
- ◆ poor achievement rates

32. Most staff working with trainees in hairdressing salons are well informed about the NVQ process and are clear about the qualifications' requirements. Some salon staff have achieved an NVQ qualification and some are qualified assessors. Trainees working in these salons receive good support from staff.

33. Beverley College has offered free training for employers' staff to qualify as assessors in order to encourage employers to appoint assessors in the workplace. The college's staff monitor new assessors every six weeks. There are currently 10 salons with qualified assessors registered with the college. These assessors are also qualified as internal verifiers and form part of the college's internal verification team. Internal verification usually takes place once each term. The results of the verification visits are well documented and recorded. Meetings to standardise assessment take place in the college every four to six weeks. All workplace assessors are invited and are given a schedule of when the meetings will take place. Any assessor unable to attend is sent the minutes of the meeting. There are satisfactory internal verification arrangements to ensure the accuracy and consistency of all assessments. Trainees are self-motivated and work well both on their own and together in groups. Tutors encourage trainees to attend an additional practical evening class if they want to increase their opportunities for assessment or catch up on lost time. All trainees achieve a basic health and safety qualification at an early stage in their training. Some trainees use this qualification to help them meet the requirement for an additional skill within their national traineeship or modern apprenticeship.

POOR PRACTICE

Trainees hold hand-held hairdryers by the hot nozzle or by tucking the hot dryer under their arm, rather than holding the dryers correctly by the handle.

34. Trainees quickly gain a good level of occupational competence during the course of their training, and demonstrate good professional skills in their activities in the workplace. The college's salon is well equipped and provides trainees with an excellent, realistic working environment. Tutors have put notices up on the walls of the salon which set out the expectations they have of the trainees. The expectations include a code of ethics, salon etiquette and an itemised list of recommended completion times for a full range of salon services. National hair product companies regularly use the college's salon to provide product training for local hairdressing salons.

35. All the training and assessment which are carried out in the workplace and in the college are undertaken by experienced and vocationally qualified staff. Salon staff in the workplace regularly update their technical skills and knowledge through staff development activities and by attending events organised by the awarding body and organisations promoting professional and technical skills in hairdressing. Specialist college staff teach and assess the key skills of application of number and information technology. Trainees receive assignments which, for the most part, have been designed to be completed at work. They cover the key skills activities which the trainees can carry out within the working environment. Any remaining key skills are integrated into the appropriate hairdressing training programme in the college by the hairdressing team during theory and practical training sessions. The college has good resources for the training and assessment of the key skills of application of number and information technology, but these resources are not used efficiently for hairdressing trainees. The trainees are regularly timetabled and tutored in classrooms which do not contain appropriate training or assessment resources for these key skills.

36. Training which takes place at work is not linked to the college's training programme, and while both on- and off-the-job training promote the trainees' skills

development, the two activities are separate and unco-ordinated. Some employers are not involved in workplace training. Trainees' reviews which are conducted by college staff in the workplace usually involve the employer or supervisor but employers are not involved in teaching or assessment. Employers do not see themselves as responsible for planning and structuring on-the-job training so that it links with off-the-job training.

37. Trainees' achievement rates are poor, and have been getting worse over the past few years. In an effort to reverse the trend, the college now gives all trainees a schedule of work and information on the anticipated completion dates for assignment work. Trainees can monitor their own progress by referring to the 'tracking sheets' in their portfolios which are completed and kept up to date by the tutor and trainee. The monitoring of the individual trainee's progress forms the main part of the review process. It is at the review stage that detailed action-planning takes place. The college's staff have worked hard to encourage trainees to remain in training and achieve their qualifications. The training team in the college closely monitors the progress of individual trainees. Wall charts map each trainee's progress towards their qualification. While many of these changes are new, retention rates have begun to improve slightly since the college started monitoring trainees' progress more closely and making greater efforts to strengthen its links with their employers. The current modern apprentices and national trainees are making good progress towards achieving their respective qualifications.

GENERIC AREAS

Equal opportunities

Grade 2

38. Beverley College has an extensive range of equal opportunities policies and procedures. The college's mission statement contains a clear commitment to providing access to the college for all the local and regional community. Equal opportunity issues form a part of the induction of all staff and trainees. The college's procedure on trainees' progress reviews includes a section on equal opportunities. Data on the ethnicity, gender and disabilities of applicants and trainees are collected in order to meet the requirements of the contract with the TEC. These data are analysed, and the results are used to guide the college's marketing strategy. The college's equal opportunities policy is reviewed every twelve months by an equal opportunities working party. The working party does not have representation from the college's team which manages and co-ordinates work-based training. All policy reviews are presented to the college's governors for adoption. Once adopted, the policy is widely distributed.

39. Minority ethnic groups make up approximately 1 per cent of the total population in the Beverley area, compared to the national average of 5.5 per cent. The college seeks to recruit trainees from under-represented groups through a series of activities in schools and through the production of specific promotional material. The self-assessment report cited a number of strengths which inspectors judged to be

either no more than normal practice, or practices which were required in order to comply with the TEC contract. Inspectors agreed with some of the strengths given in the self-assessment report. The report accurately identified weaknesses relating to equal opportunities in the workplace. Inspectors awarded the same grade as that given in the self-assessment report.

STRENGTHS

- ◆ comprehensive and frequently reviewed equal opportunities arrangements
- ◆ well-planned staff training in equal opportunities
- ◆ well-defined performance indicators for equal opportunities
- ◆ positive action to redress gender imbalances among trainees

WEAKNESSES

- ◆ poor understanding by employers of college's equal opportunities policies
- ◆ ineffective monitoring of equal opportunity arrangements in the workplace

40. The college's equal opportunities policies are comprehensive and exceed TEC requirements. The policies cover personnel management, staff recruitment and marketing, and cover access to learning, progression and assessment issues. Equal opportunities are an integral part of the induction of all new college staff and trainees, and trainees gain a good understanding of the college's equal opportunities policy. At induction, each trainee is issued with a student charter. The charter includes the college's equal opportunities policy, the main points in the *Disability Discrimination Act 1995*, the college's policy on inclusive learning, and details of the arrangements which are made to give support in study skills to trainees with learning difficulties.

41. The college has an 'inclusive learning' policy which embodies its mission to promote equality of opportunity, to grant access to learning for all those who need it, and to widen participation in education and training among all parts of the community it serves. The staff appraisal and development programme links into this mission by identifying, through staff reviews, where gaps exist in staff's awareness of equal opportunities issues. The college's key skills manager then produces a schedule of staff development events. These events are organised jointly by Humberside TEC and the college. Staff recently attended events to raise their awareness of the needs of trainees with hearing and/or visual impairments.

42. Trainees' awareness and understanding of equal opportunities and other course-related issues are monitored through a series of questionnaires which are issued at the start, middle and towards the end of each programme of study. The questionnaires are analysed by staff and the results are taken into account when course review, marketing and quality assurance procedures are reviewed. Statistics on gender, disability and ethnicity are collected to meet the requirements of the TEC contract. The data are analysed by the college and are used to support the

college's recruitment practices. They are also used to guide the college's marketing activities, for example, in order to help create a positive image of the college in publicity material.

43. The college's strategic plan includes a number of clearly defined performance indicators relating to equal opportunities. They focus on the participation of trainees and on staffing and personnel issues. All staff are provided with copies of the strategic plan.

44. The college is attempting to change employers' attitudes and to correct the traditional gender imbalances in many industries. For example, the college has analysed the gender balance across all its curriculum areas. It has introduced road shows for primary schools to improve their understanding of the education and training choices available, and it has depicted positive images of employment opportunities for women in its marketing and promotional material.

45. The college issues all employers with a handbook. The handbook includes the college's equal opportunities policy. Some employers do not recall having seen the policy and most employers have no clear understanding of the purpose or wider objectives of the policy. The trainees' progress review procedure has a section in which the trainee or reviewer can raise and record any equal opportunities issues. This section is not completed by all employers and is only completed when an issue is raised by the trainee. In practice, there are few opportunities for employers to be reminded of or directly involved in equal opportunities issues relating to their trainees.

46. Equal opportunity performance targets have been established for all sections of the college. The senior management and the college's equal opportunities working party closely monitor the performance of the college. The college has made a decision to focus on the recruitment and education of students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Approximately 20 per cent of the college's students are enrolled on entry level or foundation level programmes. The college's performance targets have not yet influenced employers' understanding of equal opportunities arrangements. The college does not effectively monitor employers' understanding or commitment to the college's policies or the employers' own policies. There is insufficient monitoring of employers' recruitment and selection practices to ensure that vacancies are open to all applicants. The table below shows that the recruitment of trainees within occupational groups strongly reflects traditional gender biases.

Table 6: gender and disabilities of trainees and representation of minority ethnic groups by occupational area

1998-99 starters (all courses)	Women	Men	People with disabilities	Members of minority ethnic groups
Hairdressing	100 %	0 %	0 %	0 %
Hospitality	8 %	92 %	0 %	0 %
Engineering	4 %	96 %	0 %	0 %
Business	86 %	14 %	0 %	0 %
Care	98 %	2 %	0 %	0 %

47. The college's main site contains many older buildings. Wherever possible, access for trainees with disabilities has been provided. There are plans to install automatic doors on all the main buildings. All buildings with access for trainees with disabilities have appropriate toilet facilities. The college has a continuing programme to improve access to buildings on the main Beverley site, widening doors, installing ramps and carrying out other work wherever necessary.

Trainee support

Grade 2

48. Trainees recruited by the college, or referred directly from the careers service, and who do not have a job are selected following completion of an application form and an interview. Most trainees undertake initial assessments in basic skills and key skills. Trainees are then offered a place subject to the availability of a suitable work placement. All trainees have access to a wide range of support services and facilities in the college. All trainees receive a general induction at the start of their training programme, after which trainees meet their course tutors who carry out further induction relating to the trainees' specific training and the qualification they are pursuing. College staff undertake reviews of trainees' progress in the workplace every six to eight weeks.

49. The college provides all trainees with a student charter which explains that programmes are available to support trainees with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The charter also outlines trainees' right to have access to the college's academic appeals procedure and to the students' grievance and complaints procedure. Some progress reviews take place with the employer present, and all reviews are recorded. Where necessary, trainees receive additional learning support from qualified college staff. The self-assessment report accurately identified a number of strengths. Inspectors found some of the other strengths identified to be no more than normal practice or the TEC's contractual requirements. The self-assessment report accurately identified one weakness but failed to report two important issues relating to trainees' induction and initial assessment in the workplace. Inspectors awarded the same grade as that given by the college in its self-assessment report.

STRENGTHS

- ◆ thorough induction in the college
- ◆ effective advice on training and employment opportunities
- ◆ comprehensive arrangements for additional learning support
- ◆ public celebration of trainees' achievements in presentation evenings

WEAKNESSES

- ◆ no initial assessment of some care trainees
- ◆ poor monitoring of induction in the workplace

50. The college's induction programme takes place during the trainees' first week at college. The content of the induction has been carefully selected and well planned to give the trainees a varied, interesting and comprehensive induction. Counselling services, the college's policies and procedures, a basic introduction to the structure of the NVQ and key skills are all covered during the first two days. During the final three days of induction, trainees take a health and safety qualification, take part in team-building exercises and prepare a final presentation. During the induction, trainees complete the documents required for their training scheme. Trainees enjoy the induction and remember much of the information which is introduced in the main induction.

51. Throughout their training, trainees receive accurate advice and guidance about arrangements for supporting their learning, and about opportunities for progressing into jobs or other qualifications. This advice is provided by trained staff during induction, during progress reviews and during tutorials in college. All applicants to the college are invited for an individual interview with staff who are trained in interviewing and counselling skills. A member of the college's staff who is responsible for providing additional learning support is available at interviews. The interview provides excellent opportunities for trainees to discuss their own vocational ambitions while hearing about the opportunities available at the college. Trainees who are unemployed receive guidance on how to find employment. Of the 14 unemployed trainees on programmes during 1997-98, 11 gained employment during or at the end of their programme. In 1998-99, of the 21 trainees who were unemployed, 18 found employment during or at the end of their programme. Many of these appointments were as a result of the college's intervention and support.

52. After the initial interview most trainees undertake an initial assessment in both basic skills and key skills. The results are used to identify any additional learning support which is required. Access to training programmes by unemployed trainees is limited by the availability of suitable work placements. Initial assessment is used to identify any additional support which trainees might need and is not used for selection purposes. The college has a department which is responsible for providing additional learning support. It has full-time staff and substantial resources. Access

to learning support facilities is good. Learning support staff also provide additional support by participating in key skills sessions. Of the 99 trainees currently in training, seven have received or are receiving additional learning support for literacy or numeracy. Four of the seven trainees have now progressed from youth training programmes to modern apprenticeships.

53. The college holds presentation evenings twice each year. Trainees, parents and the local press attend and an invited guest presents certificates and awards. The college also organises business breakfasts for employers and potential employers. The college carries out a comprehensive health and safety assessment on all employers' premises before trainees attend the workplaces and employers are not allowed to offer work placements if they do not meet criteria relating to health and safety.

54. Tutors carry out reviews in the workplace every eight weeks, in accordance with TEC requirements. In some cases, where problems have been identified, these visits are more frequent. Trainees receive regular feedback on their progress. Most reviews and the resulting action plans are recorded but in some occupational areas these records are not detailed. They do not focus on achievements nor do they result in challenging action plans. Individual training plans are updated, but achievement target dates are missing for some trainees and prior achievements have not been recorded.

55. Employed care trainees who do not start the training programme with the main group of trainees do not take initial assessment tests. Nine of the current 25 care trainees have not undertaken initial assessments either in basic skills or key skills.

56. While trainees receive a comprehensive induction programme in the college, induction in the workplace is less structured. Employers are required and agree to provide induction for trainees, but the college is not aware of the content or quality of employers' induction procedures. Rigorous checks are not made to ensure that induction in the workplace has taken place, or that it is comprehensive and to an agreed standard. Induction in the workplace does not systematically build upon induction arrangements in the college.

Management of training

Grade 2

57. Work-based training programmes are managed and co-ordinated by a separate section of the college. TEC-funded training programmes are managed by the director of business development and external services, who is one of the college's four directors. All work-based NVQ training and the training offered under the New Deal is co-ordinated and managed on a day-to-day basis by a team of three people. The team includes a training manager, a work placement co-ordinator and a clerk typist. Their role is to find and secure appropriate work placements, manage the TEC contracts, identify trainees' need for support, organise training and trainees' support arrangements in the college, and ensure that the progress of

trainees and New Deal clients is reviewed, both in the college and the workplace. The work-based training section has comparable status to other service divisions of the college and is represented on the major policy and decision-making committees by the college's director of business development and external services. The training manager organises the training programmes with the curriculum leaders. Other managers, staff and services of the college are drawn upon for the recruitment, interview and initial assessment of trainees.

58. College staff are involved in the development of operational plans which contribute to the overall strategic plan of the college. The strategic plan is designed to cover a four year period. It is updated each year. All staff development is linked to objectives within the college's strategic plan. Reviews of staff and resources by line managers and personnel managers provide a basis for staff development activities in line with the college's strategic objectives. All new staff have an induction and existing staff receive an annual appraisal. Beverley College achieved the Investors in People Standard in 1996. All staff and managers are set performance targets. Targets are monitored and reviewed on a regular base. The self-assessment report identifies the main strengths and weaknesses in the management of training. Some of the strengths given in the report are not relevant to management of training, however. Inspectors found additional weaknesses. Inspectors awarded the same grade as that given by the college in its self-assessment report.

STRENGTHS

- ◆ clear responsibilities and internal communication
- ◆ effective action by managers for the improvement of achievement and retention rates
- ◆ strong emphasis on staff development through annual appraisal

WEAKNESSES

- ◆ inadequate agreement with employers providing work placements
- ◆ weak subcontracting arrangements
- ◆ under use of management information system

59. The college is in the process of restructuring its management. A new senior management team has recently been established from existing staff, with further changes due to take place in the curriculum and middle management early in 2000. All staff are kept informed of these changes and a good working relationship exists between staff and management. Senior managers are actively involved in the day-to-day activities of the college and the training section. They regularly take part in meetings with trainees to discuss the quality of training, and visit employers.

60. Internal college meeting take place regularly. Minutes of these meetings, with action points, are distributed to key staff. Departmental meetings routinely involve key skills personnel and, on occasions, a student representative also attends. Every six weeks, vocational leaders meet with their line manager to discuss trainees' retention and achievement targets and other business targets for their area. Bimonthly meetings take place involving college staff who are involved in organising, teaching and co-ordinating TEC-funded training. The aim is to maintain effective internal links among, and develop consistent practices across, occupational areas. A staff newsletter is distributed each term. The aim of the newsletter is to introduce new staff and to keep all staff up to date on activities taking place across the college. The achievements of staff, students and trainees are also publicised in the newsletter. Communications with the TEC, local schools and employers are good. Regular events are organised jointly by the TEC and the college, including open evenings, school career events, and breakfast meetings for employers.

GOOD PRACTICE

The training team encourages full-time students to change places with trainees on day-release programmes, taking on their workplace role for one day a week. This provides valuable experience for full-time students, day-release cover for employers, and enhances relationships between employers and the college.

61. The college makes good use of its marketing and promotional activities to increase the number of work placements available to trainees and to gather valuable information on local training needs and potential skill shortages. The college's marketing schedule outlines activities which are to take place each month. Promotional activities aim to meet specific local and industrial needs and training requirements. The college targets a certain group of employers, for example, in order to improve the quality of training and increase the number of work placements.

62. The college identified through analysing its data that the retention of trainees was poor during the early stages of training. The management took the decision to select work placements more carefully and to focus more closely on trainees' progress at review meetings. An effort has been made to improve employers' commitment to training and to ensure that workplaces have appropriate resources to meet trainees' needs. Retention rates are improving.

63. There is a well-established system of classroom observation of all staff teaching in the college. The results are used as part of the annual staff appraisal. This helps teachers identify their need for staff development.

64. The college has been responsive in identifying and developing new training programmes to meet the needs of local employers. For example, the college has introduced retail and accounting courses as a result of an analysis of employers' training needs.

65. Employers are required to sign and return to the college an agreement relating to work placements. The agreement outlines the employers' basic responsibilities and accountabilities and includes the need for employers to report trainees' attendance and punctuality, details of payments from employers and health and safety issues. The agreement does not commit employers to playing an integral role in work-based training or its assessment. The agreement does not formalise minimum requirements for induction into the work placement. This is left to

individual employers and the quality of this experience is sometimes poor.

66. All employers receive a comprehensive handbook and a health and safety check at the start of a trainee's work experience. Employers are asked to complete questionnaires which measure and record their understanding of these arrangements. The college analyses the returned questionnaires in order to identify issues. However, some employers do not fully complete questionnaires or return the questionnaires for analysis. Some employers do not read the handbook.

67. Beverly College subcontracts some training and assessment to a local college of further education. Beverly College does not have a written subcontract with this college, although it has an agreement which it intends to use for this purpose. However, this document does not clearly outline what Beverley College requires of the subcontractor with regard to the review of trainees' progress, the assessment of trainees or the arrangements for monitoring quality.

68. Beverley College has not fully developed the computerised management information system which it uses to administer work-based training contracts. The system is not routinely providing the college with detailed information about all the training programmes. At present, management data are produced only to satisfy TEC contractual requirements. Curriculum leaders, tutors, trainees, managers and employers are not able quickly to gain access to management information or reports on yearly trends for trainees' retention, achievement and progression rates by occupational area and by level of study. It is difficult for managers and staff to analyse the effects of their actions and to make informed decisions about trainees' participation and performance.

Quality assurance

Grade 2

69. Beverley College meets the contractual requirements of the awarding body, the TEC and the Employment Service. The college has developed its own quality assurance system. Quality assurance procedures are recorded and up-dated annually or as required. The college has a senior management team which sets targets for the college over a three year period. These targets are reviewed annually. The annual review considers the college's past performance against the targets. Revised targets are then set. The principal carries out monthly reviews with each member of the senior management team. Specific responsibility for quality assurance within work-based training rests with the director of business development and external services. The training manager deals with quality assurance issues within the college's training unit. The manager has weekly meetings with the director of business development and external services to monitor and consider issues relating to the training programmes. The college's finance department carries out regular reviews of the college's performance against the TEC contract. A monthly report is produced and reviewed by the training unit's management team. The college is contractually required to carry out trainees' performance reviews on an eight-week cycle. The college operates a seven weekly

cycle to ensure compliance in this area. Training unit staff and associated college staff meet bi-monthly to discuss the training across all occupational areas.

70. Each occupational area within the college holds a monthly meeting which concentrates on the issues relating to its specific area of training. The college carries out continuous self-assessment of all training and related issues. Regular feedback is sought from trainees and employers through reviews and a range of questionnaires. Each year, managers observe the standard of training and assessment carried out by each member of staff in each occupational area. The self-assessment report accurately identified strengths relating to the quality review procedures, good understanding of quality assurance issues by staff, and the effective use of self-assessment. Some strengths were considered by inspectors to be no more than normal practice. Two weaknesses cited in the self-assessment report have been addressed and are now satisfactory. Inspectors identified two additional weaknesses relating to the poor involvement of employers in self-assessment and the ineffective use of data. Inspectors awarded the same grade as that given by the college in its self-assessment report.

STRENGTHS

- ◆ comprehensive quality assurance arrangements
- ◆ effective cycle of self-assessment and improvement
- ◆ good understanding and implementation of quality assurance arrangements by full-time staff

WEAKNESSES

- ◆ failure adequately to involve employers in quality assurance process
- ◆ failure to analyse specific data on work-based training effectively

71. The quality assurance arrangements are comprehensive. Procedures are clearly written and appropriate. Each occupational area is reviewed and carefully monitored. The quality assurance process is fully integrated with the strategic and operational planning cycles, and the results of self-assessment are taken into account in the setting of departmental budgets and staffing levels. Course teams have targets for the retention of students and trainees and for the achievement by students and trainees of their qualifications. These targets are monitored by the middle and senior college managers and are reviewed by the college's governors. Course teams evaluate their programmes in line with the strategic and self-assessment cycle. Self-assessment broadly follows the quality statements in *Raising The Standard*. Action plans are produced to address weaknesses which are identified in the self-assessment process.

72. Three self-assessment 'cycles' have been completed. Everyone in the college who is involved in training and assessment is consulted during the self-assessment process. A quality assurance team in the college reviews the self-assessment reports which are written by each section of the college. The team either approves a report or returns it to the relevant section for amendment. This process is closely linked to the strategic reviews which are carried out by the senior management team. As a result of this process, the college has made significant changes to its training programmes. New systems for recording and monitoring trainees' progress have been introduced. A new member of staff has been appointed with specific responsibility for carrying out reviews and assessments for the motor vehicle section. Reviews within the motor vehicle section are now up to date.

73. Full-time staff fully understand and implement quality assurance arrangements. The college informs all staff about quality assurance issues by means of well-structured meetings. The meetings have a set agenda and are generally well attended by full-time staff. Minutes are taken and action plans are written to address weaknesses. The meetings often lead to improvements being made to the training. For example, one section developed a form which is used to monitor trainees' progress very effectively. The rest of the college has now adopted this form.

74. Some examples of good practice are not exploited. For example, key skills are effectively integrated with occupational training in the business administration programmes. This has not been generally recognised or shared across all occupational areas, or even with the accounting programme which is in the same occupational area. Part-time members of staff carry out approximately 35 per cent of all tuition. Attendance at meetings by part-time staff is poor, and while the dissemination of information to part-time staff is thorough, their views and ideas are not fully taken into account.

75. Another local college has co-operated with Beverley College in its observation of teaching. Joint observations were undertaken and the grades, which were awarded according to the quality of the teaching, were compared with those awarded by Beverley College's assessment team. This has helped the college to be more confident in the grades it awards and has helped the college refine its internal inspection and its assessment of teaching standards.

76. Trainees are involved in the quality assurance process. In addition to the introduction of questionnaires in which trainees give feedback on the quality of training, the college has introduced 'student quality groups'. Trainees on work-based programmes attend the meetings of these groups. The student quality groups have not yet achieved their full potentials however, and have yet to have an impact on the quality of work-based training and assessment. The meetings concentrate on discussing ways of improving students' facilities.

77. Senior managers collate and evaluate the reports of external verifiers and produce action plans to address weaknesses identified in the reports. This collation enables comparisons to be made across occupational areas. Responsibility for

internal verification rests with each occupational area. This process is satisfactory across all areas. All occupational areas meet the requirements of the awarding bodies.

78. Employers agree to participate in measures designed to assure the quality of training, but in practice, the college fails to ensure that these agreements are kept. Employers are not fully involved in the quality assurance process. They sometimes contribute very little to training and learning. Employers receive a visit from the college placement officer who explains the NVQ process. The college produces a comprehensive and informative support pack for employers. Some employers do not read the pack and are not fully aware of the college's values, quality assurance arrangements and procedures. Employers receive questionnaires six weeks after a trainee is placed with the company. Thereafter, a questionnaire is sent to employers every 24 weeks. There is little discussion either in the college or between the college and employers on issues raised by employers. Employers do not receive a copy of the self-assessment report and are unable to influence the college's quality assurance arrangements. The college has recognised this weakness in its quality assurance arrangements and is taking steps to address the situation.

79. Questionnaires which are completed by trainees and employers are analysed for the college as a whole. The data relating to work-based trainees and their employers and work placement providers are not analysed separately. Performance data on students' and trainees' achievements, destinations, retention and progression rates are collected and recorded on two separate college data systems. The training unit uses one system, which coincides with the TEC's contract year, commencing 1 April. The main college's data system operates from 1 August each year. As a result, the statistics and data which are available to the college are not fully or effectively used to monitor and improve the quality of work-based training.