

INSPECTION REPORT

Delphi Diesel Systems Limited

17 September 2001



ADULT LEARNING
INSPECTORATE

Grading

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

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

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

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

The two grading scales relate to each other as follows:

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

Adult Learning Inspectorate

The Adult Learning Inspectorate (ALI) was established under the provisions of the *Learning and Skills Act 2000* to bring the inspection of all aspects of adult learning and work-based training within the remit of a single inspectorate. The ALI is responsible for inspecting a wide range of government-funded learning, including:

- work-based training for all people over 16
- provision in further education colleges for people aged 19 and over
- the University for Industry's *learnirect* provision
- adult and community learning
- training given by the Employment Service under the New Deals.

Inspections are carried out in accordance with the *Common Inspection Framework* by teams of full-time inspectors and part-time associate inspectors who have knowledge of, and experience in, the work which they inspect. All providers are invited to nominate a senior member of their staff to participate in the inspection as a team member.

Inadequate provision

A provider's provision will normally be deemed to be less than adequate where

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

The final decision as to whether the provision is inadequate rests with the Chief Inspector of Adult Learning. The overall judgement as to whether the provision is adequate or inadequate is included in the summary section of the inspection report.

SUMMARY

The provider

Delphi Diesel Systems Limited is located on the outskirts of Sudbury in Suffolk. It manufactures fuel injection equipment and filters for a range of diesel engines. The training centre at the Sudbury site provides engineering training for young people employed by the company. Delphi Diesel Systems Limited currently employs 22 advanced modern apprentices.

Overall judgement

The quality of provision is not adequate to meet the reasonable needs of those receiving it. Work-based learning in engineering is unsatisfactory, as are the leadership and management of Delphi Diesel Systems Limited.

Work-based learning for young people

The learners' initial training at the subcontracted college of further education is good. Learners have extensive training opportunities in the workplace and a good understanding of their apprenticeship framework. Retention rates are high. There is, however, insufficient planning of assessments, and assessment of the level 3 NVQ and key skills has been delayed. Only a small amount of assessment is by direct observation of learners' performance. The progress reviews are inadequate and staff hold insufficient data on the progress made by learners. There has been no internal verification of the level 3 NVQ and key skills.

Leadership and management

Leadership and management at Delphi Diesel Systems Limited are unsatisfactory. Internal communications are good and team-building is effective. The learners are valued and respected by their fellow employees. The company's training scheme ensures that learners gain a wide experience of the equipment and processes used by the company. However, there are no contracts with subcontractors and their performance is not monitored formally. Delphi Diesel Systems Limited has no quality assurance policy for training and very few quality assurance procedures. Arrangements for the promotion of equal opportunities are inadequate in the workplace and in the training centre.

GRADES

| | |
|---|---|
| Engineering, technology & manufacturing | 4 |
| Contributory grades: | |
| Work-based learning for young people | 4 |

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

KEY STRENGTHS

- good initial training
- good retention rates
- effective internal communications and team-building
- well-structured company training scheme

KEY WEAKNESSES

- insufficient assessment planning
- delayed assessment of level 3 NVQ and key skills
- insufficient data on the progress made by learners
- inadequate progress reviews
- no internal verification of level 3 NVQ and key skills
- no formal monitoring of subcontractors' performance
- no quality assurance policy and few procedures
- inadequate promotion of equal opportunities

OTHER IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

- wider involvement of company staff in the self-assessment process
- better use of data to guide management decisions
- more involvement of workplace supervisors in the NVQ and key skills processes

THE PROVIDER AND ITS CONTEXT

1. Delphi Diesel Systems Limited (Delphi) is located on the outskirts of Sudbury in the Babergh district of Suffolk. The company is owned by the Delphi Corporation of America, and manufactures fuel injection equipment for a range of diesel engines. It supplies original equipment and replacement parts to a number of major car manufacturing companies. Approximately 870 people work at the Sudbury factory, of whom about 30 per cent are women. Delphi currently employs 22 advanced modern apprentices who are taking engineering national vocational qualifications (NVQs) and key skills. The learners spend their first year on a full-time course at a subcontracted college of further education. During this year, the learners complete a level 2 NVQ and level 2 key skills. For the remaining three years of their modern apprenticeship, they experience a wide range of work placements at the Delphi plant. They are full employees of the company. They are assessed for their level 3 NVQ and level 3 key skills by a subcontracted private training provider.

2. Training at Delphi is funded through a contract with the Suffolk Learning and Skills Council (LSC). In June 2001, unemployment in the Babergh district of Suffolk was 1.9 per cent compared with 2.3 per cent for the area covered by the Suffolk LSC, and 2 per cent for the Eastern region. Suffolk has a small minority ethnic community which accounts for 0.7 per cent of the population in Babergh, compared with 2.2 per cent for the county, and 3.2 per cent for the region. In September 2000, the proportion of school leavers in Babergh achieving five or more general certificates of secondary education (GCSEs) at grade C and above was 57 per cent, compared with 49 per cent nationally.

THE INSPECTION

3. Two inspectors spent a total of eight days at Delphi in September 2001. The inspectors interviewed 11 learners, conducted interviews with Delphi's staff, and interviewed two work-based assessors. They observed training sessions and learners' progress reviews. They examined a range of documents, including learners' portfolios of evidence, learners' personal records, the company's plans, policies and procedures, promotional literature and reports from external verifiers. The inspectors also studied Delphi's self-assessment report, and data relating to retention and achievement rates.

Grades awarded to learning sessions

| | Grade 1 | Grade 2 | Grade 3 | Grade 4 | Grade 5 | Grade 6 | Grade 7 | Total |
|---|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| Engineering, technology & manufacturing | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| Total | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 |

OCCUPATIONAL AREAS

Engineering, technology & manufacturing

Grade 4

| Programmes inspected | Number of learners | Contributory grade |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Work-based learning for young people | 22 | 4 |

4. Delphi has operated an engineering apprentice scheme at Sudbury for more than 30 years. It now recruits young people, every September, on to a one-year initial training course, which is followed by three years of workplace training. All learners attend day-release training throughout their four-year programme, and follow courses that lead to national and higher national certificates in engineering. In October 1999, the company registered its first group of learners as funded modern apprentices. When they were registered, the seven learners in this group were in their third year of training. In September 2000, four third-year learners and four second-year learners were transferred to a modern apprenticeship programme, and in February 2001, four first-year learners were designated modern apprentices during their initial training. Three new entrants to the company scheme, in September 2001, were registered as modern apprentices from the outset. They will follow a course leading to a level 2 NVQ in performing engineering operations. There are now 22 advanced modern apprentices in training. The learners take three key skills units at level 2 during this initial training stage. College staff carry out the training, assessment and internal verification of the level 2 NVQ and key skills. At the beginning of this second year, the learners return to the company's training centre for a further three months of basic skills training under the supervision of two training officers. For the remaining nine months, the learners are placed in a wide variety of manufacturing areas in the workplace, where they are made familiar with the company's structure and operations. In their third and fourth years of training, the learners are placed for longer periods in the company's technical departments, and work towards completion of level 3 key skills, and a level 3 NVQ in technical services. A local training provider is the accredited centre for the level 3 awards, and its staff are contracted to complete the assessment and verification processes. The two training officers and two workplace supervisors are qualified assessors.

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

| Work-based learning for young people | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|---------|---|---------|---|-----------|-----|---------|-----|---------|-----|
| Advanced modern apprenticeships (AMA) | | | | | | | | | | |
| | 1997-98 | | 1998-99 | | 1999-2000 | | 2000-01 | | 2001-02 | |
| | No. | % | No. | % | No. | % | No. | % | No. | % |
| Number that started | | | | | 7 | | 12 | | 3 | |
| Still in training | | | | | 7 | 100 | 12 | 100 | 3 | 100 |
| AMA framework completed | | | | | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| NVQ level 2 completed | | | | | 7 | 100 | 12 | 100 | 0 | 0 |
| NVQ level 3 completed | | | | | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Left without completing the framework | | | | | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

STRENGTHS

- good initial training
- good retention rates
- extensive range of learning opportunities in the workplace
- good understanding of programme by learners

WEAKNESSES

- delayed assessment of level 3 NVQ and key skills
- insufficient assessment by direct observation of learners' performance
- insufficient data on learners' progress
- inadequate progress review arrangements
- insufficient planning of assessments
- no internal verification of level 3 NVQ and key skills

OTHER IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

- more involvement of workplace supervisors in NVQ and key skills
- additional endorsement of learners' workplace evidence

5. The initial off-the-job training is well organised. It provides learners with basic engineering skills and an understanding of health and safety issues. It is a good

introduction to their apprenticeship. In the past four years, all of the 21 learners who have been on the initial training programme have achieved level 2 NVQs. Four of these learners were on government-funded programmes. Two of the learners left training after they had completed the level 2 NVQ, before they were registered as advanced modern apprentices. The remaining 15 learners were registered as advanced modern apprentices later. The retention rate of advanced modern apprentices over the two years of government funding is 100 per cent. The retention rate of learners on the company's scheme over the last four years is 90 per cent.

6. There is an extensive range of learning opportunities for learners in the workplace, a strength identified in the self-assessment report. In their third and fourth years of training, the learners work alongside skilled and qualified staff in departments that deal with the development, installation, servicing and maintenance of the latest production machines. They gain experience of computer-controlled machine tools, electro-chemical machining, the use of lasers, heat treatment and metrology. Learners work alongside professional engineers and shop-floor operatives in seeking solutions to production issues. Some learners have additional opportunities to work with engineering staff from suppliers and customers of Delphi. The scope of the training available in the workplace exceeds the requirements of the level 3 NVQ in technical services.

7. The selection process for the company's training scheme is thorough, a strength identified in the self-assessment report. It includes an initial assessment of the applicants' numeracy, literacy and engineering aptitude. Applicants are informed of the results of these tests. No modern apprentices have needed basic skills support, but several learners have received additional tuition in aspects of mathematics. The learners are highly motivated to complete the company's apprenticeship scheme and to attain the national and higher national certificate qualifications at college. Many former learners are currently in senior engineering posts at the Sudbury plant. When the requirements of the advanced modern apprenticeship scheme were introduced to endorse the company's programme, the learners were initially reluctant to carry out additional work. However, after several meetings with training staff, the learners now recognise the additional benefits of the scheme and are motivated to complete the NVQ and key skills work. After consultation with the in-house assessors, the learners working on level 3 portfolios show a good understanding of the requirements of the NVQ and key skills standards. Most of these learners are willing to accept responsibility for identifying, producing and referencing portfolio evidence.

8. Seven learners have been on the level 3 programme for approximately two years, and eight learners for one year. No assessments have been completed for any level 3 units of the NVQ or key skills. A few assessments have been carried out on some elements of units. Most learners have produced a number of written descriptions of work they have produced, for example, but these have not been assessed. Arrangements have been made with the local LSC to extend the duration of the apprenticeship for the initial group of seven learners by a further three months, to December 2001. However, several of these learners still have a significant amount of work to complete. The heavy workload involved comes at the end of the company's own training scheme, when they are

beginning work as permanent employees in a specific area of the company. Several of these learners have not had an individual assessment session with the contracted assessor for more than six months. Work-based assessors meet with individual learners to provide support in the development of their portfolios. These support sessions have not resulted in assessments of the learners' workplace evidence, but progress has been made in referencing the evidence available against NVQ standards. The work-based assessors have extensive experience of processes in the workplace, but they are not yet qualified to assess the learners' work. They have not received adequate support and guidance, and have been working towards the award required for assessment of diverse evidence for over a year. A dated signature from a workplace supervisor endorses most of the written evidence produced by learners, but an additional statement is required from the supervisor to evaluate the role performed by the learner. There are very few examples of the use of direct observation to assess the performance of learners in the workplace. Records for monitoring the achievement and progress of learners against the NVQ and key skills elements and units are inadequate. The subcontracted assessor does not keep any record of achievements as they are made. Learners and training officers are unclear about how much progress each learner has made.

9. There are too few formal progress reviews during the first year of off-the-job training. During the year, college staff send two reports on the progress of learners to the training officers at Delphi. One of the training officers makes frequent visits to the college but does not carry out formal progress reviews with learners. Progress reviews in the workplace do not focus on the NVQ and key skills. At the end of each work placement, the learner's performance is reviewed at a meeting attended by the learner, the workplace supervisor and a training officer. The review includes an evaluation of performance characteristics such as initiative, co-operation, conduct and attendance, but the review does not evaluate progress made on the NVQ or key skills, and does not result in an action plan. The learners' portfolios are not examined during these reviews. The subcontracted assessor carries out an assessment review that involves the learner. These reviews result in some action plans for the collection of evidence, but reviews of this nature are infrequent and do not involve the workplace supervisors. Planning for assessment is inadequate. Opportunities for the gathering and assessment of evidence in the workplace are not identified at review meetings. Learners are left to identify relevant evidence from their workplace training for themselves. Meetings with training officers prompted several workplace supervisors to work with learners in identifying opportunities for gathering evidence. Other workplace supervisors give priority to using the learners on production work.

10. In the two years that the advanced modern apprenticeship has operated, the appointed internal verifier has not met with learners, or with any of the company's training staff, or workplace supervisors. The four in-house assessors have not received adequate guidance and support from the internal verifier. There has been no action to verify any of the assessment process that has taken place with learners.

Good Practice

The smooth transition from college to work is aided by learners spending three months in the company's training centre before starting their first work placement. During this time they enhance the basic engineering skills they have developed at the college. They are also involved in the development of prototype production equipment, and take part in community projects.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**Grade 4**

11. The overall management of training at Delphi is the responsibility of the human resources manager, who is one of eight managers reporting to the factory site manager. He delegates the day-to-day responsibility for training to the manufacturing development manager, who is based in the training centre at Sudbury. The training centre has a training officer and a senior training officer, and there are two work-based assessors. Many of the personnel procedures at Delphi are being updated. For example, the appointment procedure for mature employees, not learners, has just been rewritten, as has a new equal opportunities policy. There is no quality assurance policy for training and very few procedures. Delphi's first self-assessment report was produced in January 2000. It produced a second report in February 2001, which was updated in September 2001.

STRENGTHS

- good internal communications and effective team-building arrangements
- well-structured company training scheme

WEAKNESSES

- no formal monitoring of subcontractors' performance
- inadequate promotion of equal opportunities
- no quality assurance policy and few procedures

OTHER IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

- better use of data to help in management decisions
- wider involvement in the self-assessment process

12. Internal communications are good, and arrangements for team-building at Delphi are effective. The learners attend a daily 'start-up' meeting where training officers brief them on the day's tasks. The learners can raise any issues they choose at the meeting, and provide verbal feedback to the training officers. This meeting is valued by the learners, and reflects working practice in the production areas of the factory, where team leaders hold similar meetings at the start of each shift. The learners are treated with respect by their colleagues and are seen as a valuable asset to the company. When they have completed a six-month probationary period successfully, the learners become full employees. During their apprenticeship they enjoy the same company benefits as other employees, including free personal protective equipment, prescription safety glasses and membership of the company's pension scheme. The learners are also members of the company's association for trainees. The association, which has been running for many years, was set up to encourage young employees to be involved in the company's sports and social events. It also arranges visits to suppliers and other Delphi companies. Learners play an active part in running the association and this responsibility, along with

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the requirement that they make formal presentations following visits, contributes to their personal development. These presentations, however, are not used to assess learners' key skills. Training staff hold regular team meetings and produce clear minutes and action plans. Communications with the subcontracted college are good. Training staff are in regular contact with college staff and make visits to the college as necessary. Delphi recognised the need for more regular formal meetings and has arranged for monthly meetings during the new academic year. Links with the subcontractor for NVQs and key skills are not effective. Little assessment and no internal verification has been completed by this subcontractor and Delphi has not been kept informed of problems about some learners' lack of progress.

13. Delphi's training programme is well structured and ensures that learners are well prepared for their career with the company. Training staff draw up a clear plan showing the location and duration of the learners' work placements for the coming year. The chart shows a named contact for each work placement, and the schedule is kept up to date. Learners gain a wide experience of current manufacturing processes and associated support activities such as finance and personnel. The workplace supervisors work with the training officers to ensure that the learners make the best use of their time. They do not, however, play an active part in the collection of evidence for the NVQ or key skills. Learners spend their first year completing a good initial training programme at a local college of further education. In their work placements at the factory, the learners are given meaningful work to do, and not menial or repetitive tasks. Training officers monitor the appropriateness of the tasks assigned to learners. Data are not collected systematically, or used regularly to help managers make decisions. Retention rates are good, but training officers were not aware of retention and achievement rates of similar training providers, either locally or nationally. They had difficulty in providing accurate and reliable data in the form requested by inspectors.

Equality of opportunity**Contributory grade 4**

14. Arrangements for promoting equal opportunities are inadequate. A new employee handbook, which will include a revised equal opportunities policy, will soon be available. This will be issued to all new employees, including newly appointed learners, but not to existing employees. Learners receive a booklet published by Delphi's parent company in America, which includes a section on managing diversity in the workplace. The booklet contains clear statements of Delphi's commitment to equality of opportunity within its global workforce. The induction checklist for new employees at the Sudbury plant does not cover equal opportunities, although the extended induction received by new learners includes watching a video dealing with equal opportunities. New learners can recall the video's contents, and have an adequate understanding of equal opportunities issues. Equal opportunities monitoring does not form part of the progress reviews for learners. Some equal opportunities materials, such as the company's policy to deal with harassment, are displayed on noticeboards in the workplace. However, these display materials have had little impact on many learners, who were unfamiliar with their content.

15. There has been no equal opportunities training for training staff, workplace supervisors or managers recently. The last training took place in 1994 and was attended by one training officer and one member of staff from the human resources department. No further equal opportunities courses are planned. In spite of recruitment initiatives directed at local schools, and visits to the schools by existing learners, including the one female learner, there has been little success in recruiting from groups under-represented in training. There are no learners from minority ethnic groups and only one woman. Some alterations to the site to improve access for wheelchair users have been made. This work gave an employee with a disability, who has left the company recently, better access to his work area. However, many areas of the factory are not accessible to wheelchair users without using a goods lift, which is insured to carry people. Toilets for disabled people are provided within the facilities for able-bodied employees, but the doors are not labelled and are kept locked. The toilet for disabled men is on the first floor, and can only be reached using the goods lift. Car parking for employees and visitors with disabilities is provided near the main entrance to the factory.

Quality assurance

Contributory grade 4

16. Although Delphi relies heavily on the contribution of subcontractors to its training programmes, the company does not monitor the subcontractors' performance well. A booking system is used to request the services of the subcontractor responsible for NVQs and key skills, but neither of the subcontractors has a contract with Delphi, and there are no service level agreements. Delphi does not receive copies of external verifiers' reports on either subcontractor. The further education college has a significant quantity of quality assurance data relating to Delphi's learners. This includes grades for observed lessons, information from annual course reviews and summaries of responses from student questionnaires. None of this information is shared with Delphi. Delphi's training officers have observed learning sessions at the college, but they did not do this for quality assurance purposes, and they do not observe sessions routinely.

17. The company's self-assessment report recognises that there is no quality assurance policy for its training activities, and very few quality assurance procedures. The training staff are quick to respond if a problem arises, however, and this responsiveness has minimised the impact that the lack of a quality assurance strategy has had on the learners' experience. The company has developed questionnaires to gauge the views of its learners and their workplace supervisors. The questionnaires were first used as part of Delphi's self-assessment process in early 2000. A second set of questionnaires was completed in February this year. Responses have been summarised and analysed, but no changes have been made yet to bring about measurable improvements. In sharp contrast to its training for modern apprentices, the manufacturing process at Delphi is approved to a national quality standard, QS9000, and the selection and recruitment of engineering learners is covered by a QS9000 procedure. In addition, training staff are developing a procedure for the placement of learners into the factory.

18. The self-assessment report was written by a small number of training staff. They did not involve other Delphi employees, or consult externally. The subcontracting organisations were not involved in writing the report, and did not receive copies of it. The accompanying action plan lacks detail and has not been updated since February 2001. Training staff identified weaknesses in the action plan before inspection, and have been working with the local LSC to improve it. Inspectors found that judgement on the quality assurance of training was very optimistic, but in many areas they agreed with the self-assessment findings.

Good Practice

The learners' files at Delphi are comprehensive and very well organised. There are over 20 sections of information. This ranges from detailed attendance and punctuality records from the subcontracted further education college, to a wide range of documents relating to the learner's work placements. The records of each learner's application, assessment, interviews and induction are particularly good.