

TRAINING STANDARDS COUNCIL INSPECTION REPORT  
MAY 2000

ADULT LEARNING INSPECTORATE REINSPECTION  
NOVEMBER 2001

# City College, Norwich



ADULT LEARNING  
INSPECTORATE

### **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.

### **Grading**

In summarising their judgements about the quality of provision in curriculum or occupational areas and about the quality of leadership and management, including quality assurance and equality of opportunity, inspectors use a five-point scale. The descriptors for the five grades are:

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

## SUMMARY

The original inspection of City College, Norwich was carried out by the Training Standards Council's inspectors. The inspection resulted in less than satisfactory grades being awarded for manufacturing and health, care and public services. These areas have been reinspected against the requirements of the *Common Inspection Framework* by the Adult Learning Inspectorate, which replaced the Training Standards Council on 1 April 2001. The sections of the original report dealing with manufacturing and health, care and public services have been replaced with the findings of the reinspection. Also, the report summary, report introduction and introduction to the inspection findings have been updated and reflect the findings of the reinspection. Sections of the report, dealing with areas which have not been reinspected, have been left in their original form. The amended inspection report is published on the Adult Learning Inspectorate's website ([www.ali.gov.uk](http://www.ali.gov.uk)).

**City College, Norwich offers satisfactory training in construction, engineering and hospitality. There is good off-the-job training. Employers offer a wide range of training opportunities but have a poor understanding of the national vocational qualification (NVQ) requirements. At the time of the original inspection, training in manufacturing and care was less than satisfactory. Assessment procedures were weak and there was inadequate integration of key skills training with vocational training. There is now good workplace assessment in boatbuilding. Key skills training is integrated with vocational training, particularly in care. Retention and achievement rates are poor in some occupational areas. Changes have been made to the recruitment process for care learners and are beginning to improve the poor retention rates in this area. Equal opportunities, trainee support, management of training and quality assurance arrangements are all satisfactory. There are effective initiatives to increase participation in learning by under-represented groups. However, learners and employers have a poor understanding of equal opportunities. There is a wide range of resources available to learners at the college. Progress reviews are inadequate and learners' prior learning is rarely accredited. There are good internal communications and an effective staff development programme. Management information systems are weak. City College, Norwich sets few performance targets. The self-assessment process is effective.**

## GRADES

OCCUPATIONAL AREAS	GRADE
Construction	3
Engineering	3
Manufacturing	4
Hospitality	3
Health, care & public services	4

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

REINSPECTION	GRADE
Manufacturing	3
Health, care & public services	3

## KEY STRENGTHS

- ◆ wide range of on-the-job training opportunities
- ◆ good-quality training resources at the college
- ◆ effective initiatives towards inclusive learning
- ◆ good promotion of training opportunities to under-represented groups
- ◆ specialist centre available for learners requiring additional learning support
- ◆ effective staff recruitment, appraisal and development
- ◆ effective self-assessment process

## KEY WEAKNESSES

- ◆ poor achievement rates
- ◆ poor understanding of NVQs among employers
- ◆ no promotion or monitoring of employers' equal opportunities practices
- ◆ inadequate progress reviews
- ◆ ineffective management information systems
- ◆ few performance targets set

## INTRODUCTION

1. City College, Norwich (the college) provides education and training for over 14,500 people, three-quarters of them on a part-time basis. Twenty-six per cent of those studying at the college are aged between 16 and 18. There are a wide variety of courses including general national vocational qualifications (GNVQs) at advanced, intermediate and foundation level, NVQs, national and higher national certificates and diplomas and degrees. The college also provides learning programmes in eight prisons in Norfolk, Suffolk and Essex for over 5,000 people. The college is based on a single site near the centre of Norwich. Fifty-five per cent of the college's income comes from the Norfolk Learning and Skills Council (LSC).

2. At the time of the original inspection the college had a contract with Norfolk and Waveney Training and Enterprise Council (TEC) to provide work-based learning for young people. The contract covered modern apprenticeships, national traineeships and other training in 10 occupational areas. Five of these areas (construction, engineering, manufacturing, hospitality and care) were inspected. The other five areas (business administration, retailing and customer service, leisure, sport and travel, hair and beauty and foundation for work) were not inspected as there were only small numbers of learners in each. The college has three New Deal contracts with the Employment Service through the Norfolk Unit of Delivery. One is to provide the full-time education and training option for the 18 - 24, and 25 and over, client age groups. The second is to provide the Specialist Gateway for the unit of delivery. The third is for a pilot project to provide New Deal for lone parents. The college also has a contract with the Employment Service to offer work preparation for adults with a disability who require additional learning support. It also receives funding from the European Social Fund (ESF) to offer additional training to the New Deal client group such as driving lessons or personal skills development. Further ESF funding is used to allow those aged 25 and over, who have restricted eligibility for New Deal, to join the New Deal earlier and to undertake a wider range of activities. At the time of the original inspection the college had 337 learners on its TEC-funded training programmes, 311 of whom were in the five occupational areas inspected. The college now has 230 learners in nine areas of learning, 74 per cent of them in construction and engineering. There are 79 advanced modern apprentices, 49 foundation modern apprentices, 48 learners following NVQ programmes and five learners on foundation courses. Forty-two learners have additional learning needs and nine have additional social needs. At the original inspection there were 93 New Deal clients aged 18 to 24 and 25 clients aged 25 and over. There are now 38 New Deal clients aged 18 to 24 and five aged 25 and over. There are 67 staff involved in the training and assessment or support of work-based learners. There is also a contract monitoring team in the college's marketing and business development centre.

3. At the original inspection the TEC-funded programmes were administered through the college's responsive assessment centre (RAC), which was a unit within its learning support services. The RAC was led by a manager, accountable to the head of learning support services, and was supported by an employment liaison co-ordinator, seven employment liaison officers and an administration co-ordinator. The employment liaison team was responsible for monitoring all TEC-funded learners in college and in the workplace. Training and assessment of learners was the responsibility of the appropriate curriculum centre in the college. On August 1 2001, the marketing and business development centre was established. It brought together the marketing team, City College Enterprises and the responsive assessment centre under a single management structure. The new centre gives employers a single point of contact with the college. All training and monitoring of work-based learning is now done by the schools and curriculum centres within the college.

4. The economic profile of Norwich has changed during recent years as several large employers have left the city. The major areas of demand in the local labour market are information technology, advanced engineering and electronics, and tourism. At the time of the original inspection the unemployment rate in Norwich was 3.4 per cent and in Norfolk it was 3.7 per cent, compared with the national average of 3.8 per cent. In September 2001 the unemployment rate both in Norwich and in the whole of Norfolk was 2.5 per cent, compared with the national average of 2.9 per cent. In 1999, the percentage of school leavers achieving five or more general certificates of secondary education (GCSEs) at grade C and above in Norfolk was 47.7 per cent, compared with the national average of 47.9 per cent. In 2000, this rose to 48.2 per cent, with the proportion in Norwich being 43 per cent, compared with the national average of 47.9 per cent. The 1991 census showed that in Norwich, 1.7 per cent of the population were from minority ethnic groups. In Norfolk as a whole, the proportion was 0.9 per cent.

## INSPECTION FINDINGS

5. The college produced a self-assessment report on TEC-funded, work-based learning in February 2000. The college's quality systems manager is responsible for the self-assessment process, which involves staff concerned with the work-based learning. Judgements are based on analyses and audits carried out by the college's quality and standards unit. The college's senior management team examines all elements of the report as they are produced. The final report is approved first by the academic board and then by the college's corporation board. Following the original inspection, the college produced an action plan that set targets for dealing with its weaknesses. For the reinspection this was followed up by a special report showing the progress made towards those targets. This report accurately identified the strengths and weaknesses of the reinspected areas and inspectors agreed with the grades awarded.

6. The original inspection was carried out at the same time as an inspection of the college by the Further Education Funding Council (FEFC). The inspectors from the FEFC and the Training Standards Council (TSC) worked as a single team under the direction of the FEFC's reporting inspector. For the inspection of TEC-funded, work-based learning, a team of five inspectors spent a total of 20 days at the college. Inspectors interviewed 83 learners representing approximately 25 per cent of the total and five college staff. They visited 30 employers and work-placement providers and interviewed 29 work-based supervisors. Inspectors observed 17 training sessions, two assessments and six progress reviews. Inspectors also examined learners' portfolios and personal files, assessment records, internal verification and external verification records, minutes of meetings, records of other external audits and other management records.

7. The reinspection was carried out by three inspectors over nine days in November 2001. They interviewed 11 learners, 12 employers and five college staff. They visited 12 work placements. Inspectors reviewed ten individual learning plans, 10 learners' portfolios, internal and external verifiers' reports, course managers' files, learners' files and minutes of management meetings about the implementation of the action plan and the development of the self-assessment report.

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Grades awarded to instruction sessions at the original inspection

	GRADE 1	GRADE 2	GRADE 3	GRADE 4	GRADE 5	TOTAL
Construction	1	3	1			5
Engineering		3				3
Manufacturing			1	2		3
Hospitality	1	2	1			4
Health, care & public services			2			2
<b>Total</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>17</b>

## OCCUPATIONAL AREAS

### Construction

### Grade 3

8. City College offers training for young people in electrical installation, plumbing, painting and decorating, bricklaying and wood occupations on modern apprenticeships, national traineeships and other training programmes. There are 154 trainees in total. The number of trainees on each of the programmes is shown in the table below. All modern apprentices, national trainees and those on other training programmes working towards NVQs at level 2 are employed by local companies, many of which are small and medium-sized enterprises. These trainees attend the college for one day each week for off-the-job training. Trainees on other training programmes working towards NVQs at level 1 are not employed. They attend the college for a minimum of 16 hours each week. Some of these trainees have work placements. All training staff hold teaching or training qualifications. Trainees are assessed by college staff who hold appropriate assessor qualifications. Qualified college staff act as internal verifiers. Employment liaison officers carry out trainees' progress reviews. The proportion of trainees remaining in training is around 51 per cent across all programmes except national traineeships, which is 83 per cent. Fifty-three percent of trainees on other training programmes achieve an NVQ. No trainees have completed a national traineeship or modern apprenticeship. Five modern apprentices have gained an NVQ at level 3 over the past two years. Inspectors agreed with most of the strengths and one of the weaknesses and awarded the same grade as that given in the self-assessment report.

Numbers of trainees by programme and trade

	Modern Apprentices	National Traineeships	Other Training at level 1	Other Training at level 2	Total
Electrical installation	33	-	-	36	69
Plumbing	19	32	-	1	52
Bricklaying	-	-	8	3	11
Painting & decorating	-	-	5	-	5
Wood occupations	2	2	8	5	17
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>154</b>

### STRENGTHS

- ◆ wide range of good on-the-job training at most employers
- ◆ effective monitoring of trainees' progress and achievements
- ◆ good, well-resourced off-the-job training

### *WEAKNESSES*

- ◆ insufficient use of work-based evidence
- ◆ poor understanding of NVQs among employers
- ◆ insufficient understanding of key skills by trainees

9. There is a wide range of training opportunities at most employers. These opportunities are used effectively to allow trainees to gain a broad range of skills. Where training in particular skills is not available, employers arrange for the training elsewhere. For example, one employer has used a subcontractor to provide the trainee with the specific trade skills that the employer was unable to provide. Another employer recruited an additional service engineer for fire alarms to allow trainees normally carrying out this task to be put onto fire alarm installation work. A number of employers have arranged additional health and safety training for trainees. Trainees value the training and guidance that they receive from their employers. There is effective monitoring of trainees' progress and achievements. A detailed record is kept for each trainee. Trainees have a good awareness of their progress.

10. There is good, well-resourced off-the-job training. Course notes given to trainees are thorough and well written. In plumbing, documents issued to trainees link off-the-job training with NVQ requirements. The plumbing workshop is purpose-built and includes a gas safety centre. A two-storey, wood occupations workshop provides opportunities to work on full-sized projects. Trainees' attendance at off-the-job training sessions is lower than that for college students.

11. There is little use of work-based evidence in trainees' portfolios for construction trades other than plumbing. Much of the evidence for NVQ requirements comes from simulated work undertaken in the college. This occurs even when trainees are carrying out the same task in the workplace. Trainees regularly move from site to site, creating opportunities to gather evidence from the workplace and these are being missed. The college has recognised this deficiency and has appointed a part-time assessor in electrical installation. This assessor is working with just eight of 69 trainees. One employer with trainees is currently having a supervisor trained in assessor qualifications. Employers have a poor understanding of NVQs and the evidence required to achieve qualifications. They do not take part in trainees' reviews. Employers are unaware of the contribution that they can make to help trainees to progress. Most employers expect the college to have sole responsibility for trainees achieving their qualification. Key skills work is not fully integrated with the NVQ programme. Trainees are unclear about the purpose of key skills and their position within the training programme. Opportunities to gather naturally occurring evidence for key skills from the workplace are missed. The college has identified this issue and has made some progress towards addressing it in plumbing by introducing evidence from the workplace.

## Engineering

## Grade 3

12. City College offers training in engineering production, engineering maintenance, aircraft engineering maintenance, technical services, welding, engineering manufacture foundation, electrical and electronics servicing and vehicle mechanical and electronic systems. There are 52 trainees. Thirty-five trainees are modern apprentices, nine trainees are on other training programmes at NVQ level 2 and eight trainees are working towards a welding NVQ at level 1. Forty-seven of the trainees are employed by 27 engineering companies throughout East Anglia. Most trainees who are not employed have work placements. All nine of the modern apprentices on the aircraft engineering maintenance programme are employed by the maintenance division of an international airline. This division is based at a site near to the college. It operates as a satellite centre of the college with all training and assessment of trainees being carried out by the airline in their own training and maintenance workshops. The satellite centre has seven work-based assessors and one internal verifier, although the college is responsible for internal verification. The other modern apprentices and those trainees on other training programmes at NVQ level 2 attend the college for off-the-job training for one day each week. Trainees working towards the welding NVQ at level 1 attend the college's off-site training workshop for their off-the-job training. All training staff are occupationally qualified and also hold teaching or training qualifications. Assessment and internal verification are carried out by appropriately qualified college staff. Three work-based assessors have recently been appointed. These assessors are also responsible for reviewing the progress of the trainees that they assess. Other trainees are visited in the workplace by employment liaison officers from the college. The employment liaison officers are responsible for carrying out trainees' progress reviews and health and safety audits of employers. None of the employment liaison officers are qualified in appropriate engineering disciplines or in health and safety. No modern apprentices have completed their training. During the last two years, 16 per cent of trainees who have left have completed their individual training plans while 21 per cent of modern apprentices and 47 per cent of those on other training programmes have achieved at least one NVQ. Data from the college on retention rates are unreliable. Inspectors agreed with one strength and the one weakness in the self-assessment report. The grade awarded by the inspectors is the same as that given in the self-assessment report.

### *STRENGTHS*

- ◆ good off-the-job training
- ◆ wide range of good-quality training facilities
- ◆ effective on-the-job training in aircraft maintenance
- ◆ good use of workplace assessments

### *WEAKNESSES*

- ◆ no demanding progress and achievement targets set

- ◆ inadequate integration of key skills with NVQ work
- ◆ poor achievement rates

13. The college provides good off-the-job training. Trainees are often trained in small groups with significant amounts of individual training. There is a learning plan for the whole year. Trainees are set goals for achievement in each practical session. These are effectively monitored and the trainees are given good feedback. The college has a wide range of good-quality training facilities. These include a new block of workshops containing engineering machining, welding and fabrication, motor vehicle servicing and vehicle body repair and refinishing. The vehicle repair workshop contains new vehicle body finishing facilities. The engineering electronics and hydraulic/pneumatic rooms are furnished with a wide range of modern equipment. The satellite centre has a dedicated training area containing classrooms and modern workshop facilities. In addition, trainees are placed in the aircraft maintenance hangers on the same site, and receive well-planned and strictly controlled on-the-job training to a good standard. Aircraft maintenance trainees' on-the-job training also leads to an aviation licence qualification. The college employs three, qualified, part-time assessors to carry out NVQ assessments in the workplace. They also carry out trainees' progress reviews. The three assessors are occupationally qualified and experienced. There is good assessment practice using a wide range of evidence sources. Employers are actively involved in the assessment process.

14. Trainees are not set demanding targets for progress and achievement. Some trainees make slow progress. Many employers do not understand the requirements of the NVQ and are not able to contribute to setting targets for trainees. Key skills are not integrated into aircraft maintenance programmes. Many employers have little understanding of the requirements of the key skills elements or the need for key skills in the training programmes. Employers are not able to identify opportunities for trainees to gather work-based, key skills evidence. Trainees use simulated situations to generate key skills evidence when the situation occurs naturally in the workplace. Trainees' achievements rates are poor. Over the past two years, only 16 per cent of trainees have completed their individual training plan.

### **Manufacturing**

### **Grade 3**

15. There are five learners on manufacturing training programmes. Two are advanced modern apprentices working towards NVQs at level 3 in boatbuilding. Both are employed by local boatbuilders. Three learners employed by local furniture manufacturers are working towards NVQs at level 2 in handcrafted furniture. Learners receive on-the-job training from their employers. They attend the college for off-the-job training one day a week during term time. The college has specialist workshops for each trade. Learners' work is assessed and internally verified by qualified college staff. No modern apprentices have completed their training programmes or reached the expected completion date on their individual

learning plan. Of the eight learners who started training during 2000-01, two have left without a qualification, one has achieved a level 3 NVQ and five remain in training. The self-assessment report prepared for the reinspection gave an accurate appraisal of the manufacturing training offered by the college.

At the original inspection, the main weaknesses identified were;

- ◆ some weak assessment practices
- ◆ slow progress for many trainees
- ◆ some poor off-the-job training

16. The college's action plan identified ways to improve the quality of training and assessment and most of the weaknesses have now been dealt with. At the time of the original inspection many learners were making slow progress. Their rate of progress is now improving, especially in boatbuilding. Learners in boatbuilding now receive work-based assessment. Off-the-job training in boatbuilding has also improved and is now good. Inspectors agreed with the grade proposed in the self-assessment report.

#### **GOOD PRACTICE**

*This is a good example of learners gaining additional experience during their training. In hand-made furniture production, learners have to make a number of pieces of furniture. Rather than making these to pre-set designs using prescribed materials, learners are encouraged to modify the design and experiment with different materials. This motivates learners, and increases the breadth of their experience. The finished pieces display a very high standard of craftsmanship, innovative use of materials and good design.*

#### **STRENGTHS**

- ◆ good on-the-job training
- ◆ good assessments in boatbuilding

#### **WEAKNESSES**

- ◆ poor use of workplace evidence in handcrafted furniture
- ◆ poor target-setting in handcrafted furniture

17. Learners receive good on-the-job training from skilled, experienced craftsmen. Learners work to demanding industrial standards and are seen as integral members of the workforce. They are confident about their achievements and are allowed to develop both design and manufacturing skills. Work placements offer a wide range of training opportunities. Learners make many different products or components during their training and they work in a variety of production areas to broaden their experience. For example, learners in boatbuilding are responsible for fitting out cabins and galleys and have progressed from assisting craftsmen to working on their own. In furniture production, learners are involved in the selection of timber, setting out and the production of cabinetwork. This opportunity to develop and practise skills in the workplace has built learners' confidence and self-esteem.

18. A work-based assessor has been appointed for the boatbuilding learners. The assessor makes weekly visits to observe workplace activities and involves both the learners and the workplace supervisors in accrediting achievements towards the NVQ. Employers welcome this improvement and are now aware of their role in assessment. An individual assessment plan is produced for each learner and the assessor checks their progress at the weekly visits. As a result the learners have developed an excellent understanding of the NVQ process and are making good

progress towards achieving their qualifications. The assessor knows the boatbuilding industry well and can influence the learners' activities in the workplace and match them to the requirements of the NVQ.

19. Most of the evidence for learners' portfolios in handcrafted furniture is obtained from college work. Learners produce good quality work in their workplaces but this is seldom used for their NVQs. One learner has sole responsibility for veneering cabinetwork but has not used this as evidence for assessment.

20. Learners in handcrafted furniture are not given clear learning goals. The college does not use progress reviews to set clear targets for learners. Co-ordination of on- and off-the-job training is inadequate. Learners' statements describing work they have done are often unsigned or undated. The recent organisational changes the college made to remedy these problems have not yet had an impact.

## **Hospitality**

## **Grade 3**

21. City College offers modern apprenticeships, national traineeships and other training programmes in hospitality and catering. There are 41 trainees, 23 of whom are national trainees and 18 are on other training programmes. Of the national trainees, five are working towards NVQs in bakery service, 17 in food preparation and cooking and one in food and drink service. Of those on other training programmes, nine are working towards NVQs at level 1 in preparing and serving food, four in food preparation and cooking at level 1 and five in food preparation and cooking at level 2. There are two New Deal clients on the full-time education and training option, one in food preparation and service at level 1 and one in food preparation and cooking at level 2. There are no modern apprentices. All trainees on level 2 programmes are in full-time employment. Most of the trainees who are not employed have work placements. Trainees on programmes at level 2 or higher attend college for one day a week for theory and practical skills training and assessment. Trainees who are working towards NVQs at level 1 attend the off-site training centre where they provide a breakfast and luncheon service for other trainees and staff at this location. All assessments for level 2 NVQs take place at the college during the trainees' second year on the programme. Most assessments for NVQ level 1 take place in the off-site training centre, although there is some assessment in the workplace by staff from the training centre. Assessors are appropriately qualified. Training staff hold teaching or training qualifications. All trainees achieve the basic food handlers and basic food safety certificates as additional qualifications. Key skills training and assessment is carried out separately from the occupational training. The college's self-assessment report is detailed and includes the main strengths and weaknesses. Inspectors agreed with the grade given by the college.

### *STRENGTHS*

- ◆ well-chosen and varied work placements for NVQ level 1 trainees
- ◆ flexible access to training and assessment
- ◆ good off-the-job training
- ◆ good monitoring of trainees' progress and achievements

### *WEAKNESSES*

- ◆ ineffective target setting
- ◆ inadequate workplace assessment
- ◆ poor retention and achievement rates

22. Trainees working towards NVQs at level 1 are on varied and well-chosen work placements which suit their individual requirements. Some trainees work on more than one placement to increase their range of work experience. The amount of time spent in the placements varies, depending on the ability and confidence of the trainees. Access to training and assessment for all trainees is flexible, with extra training and assessment available outside the normal college timetable. This allows trainees to adapt their training and assessment schedule to their shift pattern at work. There is good off-the-job training. Trainees display good practical skills. Most practical training is carried out in realistic working environments. Staff are well qualified and possess wide experience of the hospitality industry. Training sessions are effectively planned with good lesson plans and clearly stated objectives. Monitoring of trainees' understanding of theory sessions is good. The course notes given to trainees cover a wide range of topics and are well presented. The resources and facilities are of a good standard. There is good monitoring and recording of trainees' progress and achievements by trainers and employer liaison officers.

23. Trainees are set few targets for progress or achievement. Those targets which are set relate to long-term goals. Short-term targets are not used effectively to help them to progress from week to week. There is insufficient assessment in the workplace. Good opportunities for gathering work-based evidence are missed because trainees and employers are unaware of the requirements of the NVQ programme. Retention and achievement rates are poor. Over the past two years, 54 per cent of trainees have left without achieving any qualifications. Of the 96 who have started during this period, eight have achieved an NVQ at level 2 and 16 have achieved an NVQ at level 1. No trainees have completed a national traineeship.

## **Health, care & public services**

## **Grade 3**

24. The college offers advanced and foundation modern apprenticeships and NVQs in care and childcare and modern apprenticeships in emergency fire service operations. There are 17 learners, three of whom are advanced modern apprentices, eight are foundation modern apprentices and six are working towards NVQs. Five of the learners on NVQ programmes are working towards level 2

NVQs in care and one towards a level 3 NVQ in early years care and education. Ten modern apprentices are working towards qualifications in care and one in emergency fire service operations. All the learners in care are employed. One learner in childcare has additional learning needs. Learners work in the fire service, residential or nursing homes for people with learning difficulties and elderly people. Care learners attend off-the-job training at the college for one day a week during term time. Learners have access to a range of resources and learning materials. These include workbooks to enable them to work at their own pace. There are individual training sessions in first aid, food hygiene, moving and handling residents and health and safety. Learners' progress is reviewed in the workplace by a trainer/assessor. Learners are assessed at work by college staff or by work-based assessors.

At the original inspection, the main weaknesses identified were:

- ◆ some weak assessment practice
- ◆ missed opportunities for training in the workplace
- ◆ inadequate integration of key skills with vocational training
- ◆ poor retention and achievement rates

25. Since then, there have been extensive changes to the structure and staffing of the curriculum centre responsible, but these are still very new and have had a limited impact. New systems for assessment and internal verification have been implemented. Learners' portfolios now contain a good standard of evidence from diverse sources. Internal verification is thorough and well-documented. Key skills training is now effectively integrated with the vocational training. Retention and achievement rates are still poor but have started to improve. The self-assessment report produced for the reinspection accurately identified the strengths and weaknesses. Inspectors awarded the same grade as that given in the self-assessment report.

#### *STRENGTHS*

- ◆ good off-the-job training
- ◆ good opportunities for additional training

#### *WEAKNESSES*

- ◆ poor retention rates
- ◆ insufficient involvement of some employers in learning

26. Off-the-job training is good. Key skills training is effectively integrated with the vocation training. Tutors explain clearly how learners can use what they learn in off-the-job training sessions in their work and how to collect and use evidence. Attendance rates are good. Learners can join the training programme at any time. Portfolios of evidence are well presented. They contain a wide range of relevant evidence and are cross referenced to the requirements of the NVQs.

27. Learners appreciate the opportunity to receive useful additional training in food hygiene, moving and handling, first aid and health and safety. They gain a good level of knowledge of these subjects and are able to generate evidence for their NVQs. The additional training also encourages safe working practices. Achievement in these additional short courses raises learners' self-esteem and helps them to progress at work.

28. Retention rates for learners in health, care and public services are poor but they are now improving. Over the past three years 50 per cent of learners have left without gaining a qualification. Many did not fully understand the nature of the training programme when they were recruited. The college has now changed its recruitment process. College staff interview learners and employers together in the workplace and fully explain their roles and responsibilities. Employers are given a handbook containing clear guidance on what is expected of them. Achievement rates have improved.

29. Some employers do not understand their responsibilities towards learners and have little involvement in their NVQ and apprenticeship training. The employers' handbook and City College's new recruitment procedures are intended to remedy this, although it is too soon to judge their effect. Most employers do not record what their employees are learning. A few employers use senior staff as trainers and mentors. They plan and record the work-based learning and offer additional courses.

## **GENERIC AREAS**

### **Equal opportunities**

**Grade 3**

30. City College has a well-publicised and -established equal opportunities policy. Student handbooks, provided during induction to the college, refer to the equal opportunities policy. Information about complaints procedures and copies of the equal opportunities policy are available to staff, students and trainees in a variety of formats. City College collects and analyses data by age, disability, gender and ethnicity. Minority ethnic groups represent less than 1 per cent of the population for Norfolk and Waveney. Student services provides information, advice and counselling for trainees on a range of issues including social, health, financial, rights and entitlements. There are additional support services for trainees with learning difficulties. Most college facilities are accessible for trainees with mobility difficulties and those with other physical disabilities. There is a range of resources for people with visual and hearing impairments. Work-placement providers sign an agreement which requires them to conform to the City College equal opportunities policy. The marketing department monitors the quality of promotional material. Inspectors agreed with the strengths and weaknesses in the self-assessment report and identified further strengths and weaknesses. They awarded a lower grade than that given by the college in its self-assessment report.

### STRENGTHS

- ◆ effective initiatives towards inclusive learning
- ◆ good promotion of training opportunities to under-represented groups
- ◆ high level of trainees on other training programmes from minority ethnic groups

#### POOR PRACTICE

*One trainee was subjected to occasional verbal abuse from a colleague in the workplace and this was not detected by the college for some time. The trainee, having been subjected to the verbal abuse for between nine and 12 months, finally informed his employer, who relocated the trainee within the workplace and allocated him a mentor. This relocation affected the trainee's NVQ programme slightly. It was only at this point that the employment liaison officer and the college became aware of this situation.*

### WEAKNESSES

- ◆ poor understanding of equal opportunities issues by trainees
- ◆ no promotion of equal opportunities to employers or monitoring of employers' practices
- ◆ inadequate staff training in equal opportunities

31. The college's equal opportunities strategy group has launched a new 'inclusive learning initiative'. The initiative is designed to raise staff's awareness of trainees' individual learning needs, and to develop and share good practice. Flexible learning approaches and access are being increasingly developed and a variety of approaches are being used with trainees. A wide range of learning aids and materials are available to trainees with diverse needs, for example those with visual and hearing impairments. Although it is not yet common practice, teachers are being encouraged, through staff training sessions, to be more alert to the needs of trainees who have mental health problems. There is good access to most facilities in the college. Car parking for trainees with disabilities is arranged on an individual basis. There is a wide range of publicity material which promotes diversity in a positive way. There are a number of staff and trainees working and training in occupational areas which challenge gender stereotypes and provide good role models. For example, there are female lecturers in plumbing and furniture making, two female trainees in construction and two male trainees in care. The college has established collaborative partnerships with external organisations and businesses which promote learning opportunities to under-represented groups. Trainees from minority ethnic groups are well represented on other training programmes. Six per cent of trainees on other training programmes are from minority ethnic groups.

32. Most trainees have little understanding of the principles of equal opportunities or of the policies and procedures applicable to themselves and others. Although they have undergone induction, trainees have little understanding of their employment rights or the assessment appeals procedure. Employment liaison officers do not actively promote equal opportunities to employers or monitor employers' equal opportunities practices. Although most employers have an equal opportunities policy, a small number do not. Staff are not aware of their responsibilities for promoting awareness and monitoring employers' compliance with legislation. Inadequate consideration of equal opportunities issues is given during reviews. Although some staff training is given to raise staff's awareness and competence relating to equal opportunities legislation and practice, this is still insufficient. Some staff are not adequately trained to fulfil the equal opportunities aspect of their job. This has been recognised by the college, which recently

recommended that equal opportunities training should be mandatory for all staff.

### **Trainee support**

### **Grade 3**

33. Trainees are recruited either through the careers service, employers or by direct application. They are interviewed and given an assessment test. Those trainees, whose initial assessment test indicates a need for additional support, are offered a basic skills assessment. Other trainees may take a key skills diagnostic test. Trainees who are unsure of which occupation to follow are able to sample training in a variety of occupational areas. The college has a specialist centre for trainees who require additional learning support. Advice on occupational training and NVQs is given to all applicants before being offered a place. Those applicants who accept a place on an NVQ programme are allocated an employment liaison officer. The employment liaison officer is the main link between the employer, college tutors, workplace assessors and the trainee. The employment liaison officer processes the trainees' individual training plan, provides an induction to the NVQ process and outlines the roles and responsibilities of the trainee. There is a ratio of approximately 50 trainees to each of the employment liaison officers. College tutors carry out trainees' induction to the individual training programme. The employment liaison officer visits trainees in the workplace every 12 weeks in order to provide pastoral support, develop their awareness of equality of opportunity and monitor their progress towards achieving the NVQ. Although employers or work-placement providers carry out trainees' induction in the workplace, this is not monitored. There are currently four staff who hold qualifications in the accreditation of prior learning. City College's self-assessment report contained one strength which inspectors considered to be no more than a basic statement of intent, and one weakness. Inspectors identified further strengths and weaknesses and awarded a lower grade than that given by the college.

#### *STRENGTHS*

- ◆ wide range of resources to support trainees' needs
- ◆ specialised centre for trainees with learning difficulties
- ◆ most trainees employed

#### *WEAKNESSES*

- ◆ insufficiently rigorous progress reviews
- ◆ little accreditation of trainees' prior learning
- ◆ ineffective induction

34. The college has comprehensive learning resources which are available to all trainees. Trainees are initially assessed at the interview stage and those requiring additional learning support are identified. There are timetabled support sessions for trainees to attend during their time at the college. Learning support materials are varied and of good quality. They cover literacy, numeracy, dyslexia and key

skills. The learning materials are available in large print, colour, Braille and computer-based software. There are also materials to help programme tutors to recognise and work with trainees requiring learning support. The learning materials and personal support are located within the college's library complex. The support available is publicised using a range of posters in all college buildings. Job vacancies are posted throughout the college. The student services division in the college offers careers advice as well as additional support for social assistance.

35. The college has a separate training workshop which is dedicated to students and trainees who require additional learning support. The workshop is located away from the college's main campus and has facilities for a range of occupational skills. Trainees requiring literacy and numeracy support are well catered for during their occupational training and assessment on NVQ level 1 programmes. Those trainees who have not decided which NVQ route to take can sample different occupational trade areas. Trainees at the training workshop are placed with companies which are supportive of their learning and social needs. Many national trainees and trainees on other work-based training programmes are employed. A number of trainees requiring additional learning support have been employed by their work-placement provider on completion of their level 1 training programme. A number of these trainees have progressed to NVQ level 2.

36. Most reviews are not sufficiently thorough and lack detail. Some employment liaison officers are not occupationally qualified in the areas that they are reviewing. They are not always familiar with the detailed requirements of the trainees' NVQs. Employers are not involved in reviews. Individual training plans are not always updated when projected completion dates are changed as a result of a review. Trainees' prior experience and qualifications are rarely taken into account during initial assessment or when preparing trainees' individual training plans. The college has identified this weakness in its self-assessment report and has arranged training in the accreditation of prior achievement for four members of staff. Trainees' induction is ineffective. Trainees are unable to recall specific details or relate the induction to their NVQ programme. Most trainees are unable to clearly recall the NVQ appeals procedure, equality of opportunity issues and the grievance procedures covered in the induction programme. The occupational induction by college tutors is combined with the NVQ programme at the start of the college academic year. Trainees starting training at other times of the year do not receive this induction.

### **Management of training**

### **Grade 3**

37. City College has a strategic plan and a clearly identified management structure. The RAC within the learning support services of the college has overall responsibility for work-based training for young people. This centre has a designated manager supported by an employment liaison co-ordinator and a team of one lecturer and seven employment liaison officers, some of whom are part

time. Two of the employment liaison officers are also part-time lecturers. The training centre manager, the lecturer and one of the employment liaison officers are qualified as assessors, internal verifiers and in the assessment of prior learning and achievement. Another three of the employment liaison officers are qualified assessors. The one full-time and both part-time lecturers hold teaching or training qualifications. An administration co-ordinator and two administration assistants provide support for the area. The employment liaison officers are responsible for establishing links with local companies, finding work placements for trainees and carrying out trainees' progress reviews. Responsibility for training, assessment and internal verification rests with the managers of the curriculum centres within the college. The curriculum centre managers report directly to an assistant principal of the college. Staff have an annual appraisal and a personal development plan. The college was re-accredited with the Investors in People Standard in March of this year. Management information is held in a variety of formats on different information systems. Inspectors agreed with many of the strengths and weaknesses identified by the college in its self-assessment report. They identified additional strengths and weaknesses and awarded the same grade as that given.

#### *STRENGTHS*

- ◆ effective staff recruitment, appraisal and development
- ◆ good internal communications
- ◆ good links with external agencies

#### *WEAKNESSES*

- ◆ inadequate co-ordination of on- and off-the-job training
- ◆ ineffective management information system

38. City College has effective procedures for the recruitment, appraisal and development of staff. Recruitment procedures, whether for internal or external appointments, are comprehensive, consistent across the college and well recorded. The recruitment and selection process is closely monitored. New staff have an induction to the college which covers the staff appraisal and development process. All staff are subject to appraisal and personal development plans have recently been introduced. The college's procedures require staff to undertake a self-assessment of their performance as a context for appraisal. Appraisals are normally carried out by an individual's line manager but academic staff can elect to be appraised by another member of staff who is not their line manager. Staff have clear job descriptions which identify their roles and responsibilities. These are well understood by staff and form part of the appraisal process. Observation of teaching has been introduced but is not part of the appraisal process for teaching staff.

39. The college has clear, identified lines of communication. A manager's forum, consisting of the college's senior management team, heads of curriculum and head of support services, are responsible for the implementation of the college's strategy and policies. Curriculum centres are responsible for training and assessment on the programmes. There are regular team meetings within the RAC.

Employment liaison officers also meet at regular intervals. All meetings are well recorded. Meetings between curriculum programme managers and employment liaison officers are held twice each term. These concentrate primarily on the progress of trainees. There is good communication between staff and effective use of electronic mailing. Employment liaison officers can attend meetings of the curriculum teams as and when appropriate. The RAC has well-developed links with external agencies. Regular contact is maintained with careers centres which are important sources of referrals. A network has been established with other training providers through Norfolk and Waveney TEC. Employment liaison officers have well-developed links with local industry through the placements that they have already established. Frequent attendance at school and other careers events is used to help to further improve the links with the local community.

40. Co-ordination of on- and off-the-job training is inadequate. For example, in care, some trainees are assessed before they have had the off-the-job training to provide the necessary background knowledge to the NVQ competency being assessed. Employers are not involved in designing training programmes for their trainees. Learning in the workplace is often not planned and is negotiated by the trainee with workplace supervisors, without formal recognition by the college. Connections between on- and off-the-job training are rarely made during reviews. Employers are not always involved in the review process and are often unaware of their trainees' current off-the-job training programmes or the requirements of the NVQ programme. There is little direct contact between the staff in the curriculum centres who are carrying out the off-the-job training and assessment and employers, and staff in the curriculum centres are often unaware of the training being given in the workplace. There is communication between staff in the curriculum centres and those in the RAC who visit trainees in the workplace, but information on trainees' progress and achievement is held within the curriculum centres and is not well communicated. This has been recognised by the college and improvements are planned for the next academic year. The RAC has attempted to involve employers more in the training process but has had a poor response. Management information is inadequate to effectively guide management decisions. For example, data for government-funded programmes are inaccurate and unreliable. This has been recognised by the college. A new management information system, which will allow closer monitoring and analysis of trainees' progress at an individual level, is being implemented.

### **Quality assurance**

### **Grade 3**

41. The college has a written quality assurance policy and procedures which apply across the college and include work-based training. Responsibility for implementing these measures lies with the quality systems manager. The college is accredited to the ISO 9002 quality standard. There are no procedures covering quality assurance for trainees in the workplace. City College's staff carry out annual audits of the implementation of the procedures. All training staff are observed during training sessions. City College's managers have written

agreements with employers and work-placement providers which cover the roles and responsibilities of both parties regarding trainees and their training. Qualified college staff carry out internal verification satisfactorily across all occupational areas. The college's quality systems manager monitors external verifiers' reports, taking action as necessary. The views of trainees, employers and staff on the training programmes are sought regularly. Staff from both the RAC and the curriculum areas were involved in the self-assessment process and the preparation of the report. The self-assessment report provides an accurate summary of quality assurance for work-based training. Inspectors agreed with the grade given by the college.

#### *STRENGTHS*

- ◆ effective self-assessment process
- ◆ regular collection and use of the views of trainees, staff and employers

#### *WEAKNESSES*

- ◆ insufficient monitoring of quality of training in the workplace
- ◆ few performance targets set

42. There is insufficient direct monitoring of the quality of training in the workplace. Employers are not involved in many quality assurance activities. The employment liaison officers do not regularly monitor the implementation of the employer's agreement during their scheduled visits. Few performance criteria are set. The college uses some basic performance information provided by Norfolk and Waveney TEC for each occupational area as a means of comparing its performance with that of other training providers. There are no targets for the successful completion of training or achievement of qualifications. There is no effective use of targets for individual trainees to encourage them to progress and to achieve their qualification. There is no monitoring of the length of time spent on training programmes.

43. The self-assessment report is self-critical and thorough. Collection of evidence is also thorough, and includes the observation of teaching. There has been careful evaluation of the evidence. Accurate judgements have been made. Staff view self-assessment as a means of achieving continuous improvement. Including many of those identified. The action plan resulting from self-assessment is realistic and is being implemented. There is regular collection and evaluation of trainees, employers and staff's views concerning the effectiveness of work-based training. The views of a small sample of trainees are collected, together with those from other students at the college. The college has also devised its own system for obtaining information from trainees and employers based on the computer analysis of responses to standard questionnaires. Staff are encouraged to give their views to their managers at any time on an informal basis and more formally at their annual review.