

INSPECTION REPORT

RPS Rainer City Training Reinspection

09 February 2003



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. 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 **learndirect** provision
- Adult and Community Learning
- learning and job preparation programmes funded by Jobcentre Plus
- education and training in prisons, at the invitation of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Prisons.

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.

SUMMARY

The provider

RPS Rainer City Training is part of a national charity based in Portsmouth. It is a long-established training organisation providing training in six areas of learning. A high proportion of the learners have additional learning and social support needs. An executive manager leads a team of five senior managers, responsible for finance, quality assurance and the curriculum, and three managers in a wider team. RPS Rainer City Training was last inspected in December 2001. Three areas of learning and all aspects of leadership and management were found to be satisfactory or better. The Life Skills provision in the foundation area of learning was found to be unsatisfactory. This provision was replaced in October 2002 by an Entry to Employment pilot programme.

Overall judgement

The Adult Learning Inspectorate inspection in December 2001 found that Life Skills provision in the foundation area of learning was unsatisfactory. Life Skills provision has been replaced by Entry to Employment and at the end of the reinspection period in March 2002 the foundation provision was found to be good.

Grades awarded

	Original	Reinspection
Foundation programmes	4	2
Contributory grades:		
Work-based learning for young people		2

THE REINSPECTION

1. The reinspection of RPS Rainer City Training (RPSRCT) took place over two interim visits by one inspector and over a final two-day visit by two inspectors in March 2003. Forty-seven learners were interviewed and 37 individual learning plans and 31 portfolios were studied. Five employer representatives were interviewed and 20 interviews with staff were conducted in visits to five sites. Seven training sessions were observed. Documents examined included policies and procedures, development and implementation plans, minutes of meetings, and learner and employer feedback records.

Grades awarded to learning sessions at the original inspection

	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Total
Business administration, management & professional	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
Hospitality, sport, leisure & travel	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
Health, social care & public services	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Foundation programmes	0	0	3	1	1	0	0	5
Total	0	1	3	3	1	0	0	8

Grades awarded to learning sessions at reinspection

	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Total
Foundation programmes	0	1	2	4	0	0	0	7
Total	0	1	2	4	0	0	0	7

AREAS OF LEARNING

Foundation programmes

Grade 2

Programmes inspected	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Work-based learning for young people	91	2

STRENGTHS

- effective innovative training
- well-motivated client group
- good learner support
- good retention and attendance rates

WEAKNESSES

- some weak target-setting

OTHER IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

- further professional training for some staff

2. Training is effective and innovative, incorporating a wide range of activities, including parenting classes, cooking, drama and outdoor pursuits. These activities help learners to develop teambuilding and communication skills. Learners are encouraged to take part in in-house training at their work placement. These courses are appropriate and relevant to the learners. Resources are good. Learners have good access to information technology (IT) and literacy, numeracy and language development training. Learning plans are good and record accurately the employment and personal aims of the learners. Learning plans also link personal goals to employment aims.

3. Learners are well motivated. They fully understand the learning programme and their own progress. Learners who achieve their personal objectives are presented with in-house certificates. There are success posters displayed in the training centre and bonus scheme payments for learners who achieve their individual objectives. Learners can attend a wide range of work tasters and work placements at over 40 work-placement providers. One learner on a horticultural work taster has achieved very good skills in floristry and the provider is now working with her to find a relevant work placement.

RPS RAINER CITY TRAINING REINSPECTION

Staff fully understand the individual needs and skills of the learners. One learner with good music skills is being supported in an application for a music course and is being provided with help to link his personal aims to his occupational objectives.

4. Learner support is good. Work-placement providers take part in progress reviews and fully understand learners' development plans. Learners can start the learning programme at any time and can extend their training programme if relevant to their development needs. Key skills training and assessment are integrated well with on- and off-the-job training and are understood well by the learners. There is good support for learners with additional learning and/or social needs. Effective basic skills provision enables learners to identify their progression needs and is linked effectively to other subject areas. Basic skills staff have recently taken part in training to meet the requirements of the core curriculum. Staff to learner ratios are good. All trainers are appropriately qualified and many have additional skills such as counselling. There are good language support sessions for asylum seekers. Learners are also encouraged to attend provision at local further education colleges if appropriate.

5. Retention and attendance rates are good. All staff have been involved in a clear action-planning process to improve retention and attendance. Currently, 82 per cent of learners regularly attend the learning programme. The retention rate is 57 per cent. The progression rate into jobs of 27 per cent is good for learners with multiple barriers to gaining employment. Fifteen per cent of learners progress into further education or training.

6. All aspects of training courses are carefully monitored and evaluated with appropriate improvements implemented. Training needs and learning objectives are clearly detailed including the design of training courses, timescales and resources and their evaluation. The foundation team is responsible for the monitoring of individual learners' progress and the individual training sessions. Observation of training takes place. Learners receive very frequent feedback on their progress, often on a daily basis. Their progress is carefully recorded and monitored. Learners complete a feedback questionnaire after induction and at the end of their learning programme.

7. The management information system is not sufficiently developed. For example, some monitoring information on individual learners is not readily available. Although data on learners' ethnicity and gender are recorded, they are not analysed to identify trends in retention, attendance or achievement. This was acknowledged in the self-assessment report.

8. Some target-setting is weak. Targets are set through the individual learning plans, and through the National Record of Achievement. Self-assessment has resulted in an audit of progress reviews and measures have been put in place to improve them. Staff training has taken place. However, in some cases these targets are still inadequate. Achievement dates for objectives have not been identified for all learners. Tasks are unclear and do not give learners a clear understanding of how to progress. Employers do not understand how they can help learners' progress.

Good Practice

Learners have responsibility for identifying working practice against NVQ performance criteria and ask supervisors and employers to complete NVQ task sheets