

INSPECTION REPORT

IN2work Limited

11 July 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 and Jobcentre Plus programmes. 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 learning within the remit of a single inspectorate. The ALI is responsible for inspecting a wide range of government-funded learning, including:

- work-based learning for all people over 16
- provision in further education colleges for people aged 19 and over
- **learndirect** provision
- Adult and Community Learning
- training 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.

Overall judgement

Where the overall judgement is that the provision is adequate, only those aspects of the provision which are less than satisfactory will be reinspected.

Provision will normally be deemed to be inadequate where:

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

This provision will be subject to a full reinspection.

The final decision as to whether the provision is inadequate rests with the Chief Inspector of Adult Learning. A statement as to whether the provision is adequate or not is included in the summary section of the inspection report.

INSPECTION REPORT

IN2work Limited

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INSPECTION REPORT

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROVIDER

1. IN2work Limited (IN2work) was established in 1983 as Work Experience Centre Limited to provide work-based learning for unemployed and employed young people in Staffordshire. The organisation is a private training company and a wholly owned subsidiary of a registered charity. IN2work has four training centres based in Stafford, Hanley, Tamworth, and Burton-On-Trent. The company's head office is situated at the Stafford centre.
2. The senior management team consists of a chief executive, two directors and a company secretary. In addition there is a quality assurance manager, a human resources manager and a commercial manager. There are also five operational managers with responsibilities for occupational areas, staff and budgets. The company employs a further 67 training and administrative staff, of whom three work part time.
3. IN2work funds its training provision through Staffordshire Learning and Skills Council (LSC) to provide Life Skills programmes, vocational and pre-vocational training. IN2work also receives funding through Jobcentre Plus for New Deal 18-24 clients on environment task force and voluntary sector options. Some of the training for New Deal learners is subcontracted to a number of organisations. IN2work has a further contract with Jobcentre Plus for programme centres based in Tamworth, Burton-on-Trent and Stafford, where jobsearch facilities to job-ready clients are provided.
4. Staffordshire has a minority ethnic representation of 1.4 per cent, according to the 2001 census, compared with 9.1 per cent for England as a whole. The proportion of school leavers in Staffordshire achieving five or more general certificates of secondary education (GCSEs) at grade C or above is 48 per cent. The rate as for England as a whole is 47.9 per cent. The unemployment rate for Staffordshire is 1.7 per cent, for June 2003, compared with the rate for England as a whole of 2.7 per cent.

SCOPE OF PROVISION

Construction

5. Construction training is based at the Stafford training centre. There are 13 learners in construction and five New Deal clients. All learners are working towards a national vocational qualification (NVQ) at level 2 in carpentry and joinery. New Deal clients are working towards an NVQ at level 1. Most learners attend the Stafford centre for one day each week for off-the-job training, spending four days each week on work placement or with their employers. At the time of inspection, five learners were attending the centre five days a week while waiting for a work placement. Most assessment is carried out by observation of learners' performance in the workplace. Training is the responsibility of two part-time members of staff.

Engineering, technology & manufacturing

6. Engineering training is based at the Stafford training centre. IN2work offers training towards NVQs at level 1 and 2 in light vehicle mechanics. There are 20 learners working towards an NVQ at level 2 and one New Deal 18-24 client working towards an NVQ at level 1. Work placements are arranged with local companies for many of the learners. Those learners without work placements attend off-the-job training on a full-time basis at IN2work. Learners on work placement usually attend IN2work for off-the-job training and learning support for one day each week. One qualified assessor from IN2work carries out assessments in the workplace and reviews learners' progress.

Business administration, management & professional

7. Business administration is offered at all four IN2work training centres, in Stafford, Hanley, Burton and Tamworth. There are 42 learners in the occupational area, including eight New Deal 18-24 clients. One learner is working as an advanced modern apprentice, 14 learners are foundation modern apprentices and 27 are working towards an NVQ at level 2. The modern apprentices are also working towards the key skills element of the modern apprenticeship framework. Off-the-job training is provided at the training centres to meet identified training needs, for example key skills and portfolio support. Learners are visited monthly in the workplace by training staff to review progress and to plan and carry out assessments.

Retailing, customer service & transportation

8. Retailing training is offered at all four IN2work training centres, in Stafford, Hanley, Burton and Tamworth. There are 63 learners and 25 New Deal clients in the occupational area. Three learners are working as advanced modern apprentices and 13 learners are working as foundation modern apprentices. Forty-seven learners and 25 New Deal clients are working towards an NVQ at level 2. Most training is carried out in the workplace. Some off-the-job training is provided in the workplace and at IN2work training centres, mainly in the form of individual coaching concentrating on basic skills, key skills and jobsearch. All assessment is carried out by IN2work's staff.

Hairdressing & beauty therapy

9. Hairdressing programmes are based at the Hanley training centre in Stoke on Trent. There are 19 learners in the occupational area, seven foundation modern apprentices and 12 learners are working towards an NVQ at level 2 in hairdressing. During their programme most learners are placed in a salon to gain work experience which varies from one day to four days each week. Off-the-job training is provided at the training salon in Hanley and includes all background knowledge training and most practical assessments.

Health, social care & public services

10. IN2work provides training programmes in early years care and education and care at two of their four training centres, Burton-on-Trent and Tamworth. There are 72 learners on health and social care programmes. Four learners are advanced modern apprentices, 24 are foundation modern apprentices and 44 are working towards an NVQ at level 2. Learners are placed with local providers, including retirement homes, day nurseries, and schools. Most learners receive training in the workplace, and assessments are carried out in the workplace by IN2work assessors. Off-the-job training is provided at both training centres and learners attend on a negotiated basis for training.

Foundation programmes

11. Foundation programmes are offered at all four IN2work training centres, in Stafford, Hanley, Burton and Tamworth. There are 126 learners on IN2work foundation programmes which include Life Skills, programme centres, New Deal 18-24 and a range of occupational programmes at NVQ level 1: construction, engineering, business, retailing and hairdressing. The Life Skills programme covers a range of areas including literacy, numeracy, social skills and personal effectiveness. The programme lasts for 13 weeks and attendance is initially for 16 hours each week. Learners are also able to take part in relevant work experience during their time on the programme. Programme centres are designed to be flexible enough to cater for the specific needs of individual clients in terms of employment skills. The programme lasts for up to 13 weeks with jobsearch as the main element and employment as the progression aim. Learners also take part in formal training sessions covering topics including compiling a curriculum vitae (CV), letter writing, telephone skills and interview techniques. Clients on the New Deal 18-24 programme work towards a relevant NVQ at level 1 while attending extended work experience. All learners have the opportunity to gain additional qualifications and learners identified as having an additional learning need receive basic skills training.

ABOUT THE INSPECTION

Number of inspectors	13
Number of inspection days	52
Number of learner interviews	119
Number of staff interviews	76
Number of employer interviews	41
Number of subcontractor interviews	7
Number of locations/sites/learning centres visited	58

OVERALL JUDGEMENT

12. The quality of provision is not adequate to meet the reasonable needs of those receiving it. More specifically, IN2work's leadership and management, equality of opportunity and quality assurance are all satisfactory. The quality of work-based learning in engineering, technology and manufacturing; hairdressing; health, social care and public services; and foundation programmes is satisfactory. The quality of work-based learning

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in construction, business administration and retailing and customer service and transportation is unsatisfactory.

GRADES

grade 1= outstanding, grade 2 = good, grade 3 = satisfactory, grade 4 = unsatisfactory, grade 5 = very weak

Leadership and management	3
Contributory grades:	
Equality of opportunity	3
Quality assurance	3

Construction	4
Contributory grades:	
Work-based learning for young people	4

Engineering, technology & manufacturing	3
Contributory grades:	
Work-based learning for young people	3
New Deal 18-24	None

Business administration, management & professional	4
Contributory grades:	
Work-based learning for young people	4

Retailing, customer service & transportation	4
Contributory grades:	
Work-based learning for young people	4

Hairdressing & beauty therapy	3
Contributory grades:	
Work-based learning for young people	3

Health, social care & public services	3
Contributory grades:	
Work-based learning for young people	3
New Deal 18-24	None

Foundation programmes	3
Contributory grades:	
New Deal 18-24	3
Work-based learning for young people	3
Programme centres	3
Life Skills	3

KEY FINDINGS

Achievement and standards

13. **On construction training programmes, learners acquire a high level of practical skills** and benefit from individual support by training staff. **However, no learner has achieved their target qualification in the past three years.** Approval to assess and award certificates was reinstated five weeks before the inspection, after a nine-month period during which the awarding body had withdrawn centre approval. Certification and assessment was not possible during this period. Retention on construction programmes is satisfactory, with a high number of learners still in learning after one or two years on programme.

14. **Engineering motor vehicle learners have a good achievement rate for additional qualifications.** Achievement rates for these qualifications range from 85 per cent to 100 per cent over a three-year period. There are good work placements for learners. Many learners' progress is heavily reliant on witness testimony and **there is not enough observation or assessment in the workplace.**

15. **Retention and achievement rates are poor for business administration programmes.** Of those New Deal 18-24 clients who started in 2001-02, 43 per cent were retained, 29 per cent completed their planned learning and 29 per cent found jobs. The standard of learners' work on business administration programmes is satisfactory. They are able to gather evidence for their portfolios efficiently and make good progress. **Many learners' portfolios contain evidence which has been gathered in response to assessment planning, but which had not been assessed at the time of inspection.** Learners are uncertain of their progress, and many who leave the programme early do so without being credited with individual NVQ-unit certification.

16. **Retailing and customer service learners receive good on-the-job training in the workplace.** Much of this training is incremental, and learners graduate to more complex and responsible tasks over time. **However, achievement rates are poor for modern apprenticeship and New Deal programmes.** Of the two learners who started the advanced modern apprenticeship programme in 1999-2000, one has left without completing the framework. The other learner is making slow progress and still in learning 12 months after the expected completion of the programme. Thirty-seven learners have started as foundation modern apprentices in the past four years of whom 13 are still in learning. **No learners have successfully completed their modern apprenticeship**

framework. All four NVQ learners who began in 1999-2000 successfully achieved their qualifications but only 50 per cent did so in 2000-01. **For New Deal clients who started in 2001-02 the achievement rate is poor.** Of the 28 clients, eight found jobs and one completed the planned learning programme.

17. **Retention and achievement rates are good for hairdressers at NVQ level 2.** In 1999-2000, 73 per cent of learners achieved their NVQ. In 2000-01, 80 per cent achieved their qualification. Nine learners began as foundation modern apprentices in 2001-02 and 2002-03, seven of whom are still in learning. NVQ unit completion is progressing well for those learners still in training, with many learners having only two units to complete before their end of programmes. IN2work find good work placements for the learners. Learners' practical work is satisfactory, and background knowledge is satisfactory in supporting the practical activities.

18. **Framework achievement is poor for modern apprentices on health and social care programmes.** Few learners achieve their qualifications within the time identified in their individual learning plans. However, retention and achievement rates are improving significantly. Nineteen foundation modern apprentices and NVQ learners have completed their qualifications since January 2003. Learners are progressing from foundation to level 2 NVQ programmes and a small number of learners have progressed to level 3. **Training is good in work placements, support is good and most learners gain jobs.** There are only three learners still in learning on New Deal programmes. In 2001-02, 59 per cent of learners completed their planned learning and 27 per cent gained jobs.

19. **On foundation programmes, progression rates are good for Life Skills learners.** In the period 2001-02, 80 per cent progressed to further education and training or full-time employment. In the current year, of the 42 starts, 69 per cent have achieved positive outcomes. The remaining 23 learners are still on the programme. The standard of training was satisfactory or better on all foundation programmes. Training sessions were generally well planned and prepared. Some New Deal 18-24 sessions were of a very good standard.

20. **Retention rates are very good for programme centre clients.** In the year 2002-03, 92 per cent of clients reached the end of their planned learning programmes and in the current year, 2003-04, all starters to date, have completed their planned learning programmes. There is satisfactory progression into employment for these clients, most of whom are encouraged to take part in a range of additional short courses, many leading to accredited certificates. **Many Life Skills learners have achieved recognised qualifications.** New Deal 18-24 clients have a choice of over 50 certificated short courses up to level 2, and appropriate level 3 courses can be arranged where there is a particular individual need. Over 60 per cent of those New Deal clients accessing these short courses gain qualifications. **For New Deal 18-24 clients in the year 2001-02, the retention rate was low at 17 per cent,** and 28 per cent found employment. **However, there has been an improvement in the retention rate in the current year.**

21. **There are poor achievement rates for NVQs at level 1.** In the years 2000-01 and 2001-02, only 17 per cent and 18 per cent respectively successfully completed their

training and gained their NVQ. Progress has also been slow for most learners on NVQ level 1 programmes.

Quality of education and training

Grades awarded to learning sessions

	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Total
Construction	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
Engineering, technology & manufacturing	0	0	2	1	0	0	0	3
Hairdressing & beauty therapy	0	0	1	2	0	0	0	3
Health, social care & public services	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	3
Foundation programmes	0	6	2	2	0	0	0	10
Total	0	6	5	9	0	0	0	20

22. All learning sessions that inspectors observed were satisfactory or better. There were no unsatisfactory learning sessions.

23. Engineering, health and social care, and retailing and foundation learners receive satisfactory off-the-job training. It is not satisfactory for construction, business administration and hairdressing. In some cases the pace is slow, and there is insufficient challenge for learners.

24. Learners in all areas of learning benefit from the good personal support by employers and IN2work's staff. Tutors are able to offer good pastoral support and guidance to meet the individual needs of the learner. Work placements are of a good standard and provide a wide range of work and assessment opportunities.

25. On construction programmes, work placements are sought with the needs of the learner in mind, to increase their potential to achieve and gain jobs. **Learners are provided with opportunities to complete tasks which require high levels of skill.** Staff at the work placements are aware of the need to build learners' confidence and to provide pastoral support throughout their programmes.

26. Motor vehicle learners work in a range of motor vehicle companies ranging from sole traders to national dealerships. **They have excellent opportunities to develop skills at work and their supervisors provide appropriate support and guidance.** Learners receive a thorough induction into the workplace from employers who then continue to support them throughout their training. Supervisors are keen to pass on their knowledge to the learners, who speak highly of their work placements.

27. Business administration employers are supportive of training, and welcome IN2work's staff to their premises as part of a pattern of regular visits to support learners' progress. **Not all employers are familiar with the requirements of competency-based qualifications,** but all the employers interviewed appreciate and support the need for staff to be competent in their job roles.

28. **In addition to developing valuable job skills, retailing and customer service learners also achieve considerable development of their personal skills and qualities.** They gain in confidence and maturity, and relate more effectively to customers through improved customer communication skills. They become more responsible in their approach to work.

29. **Training assessors give excellent support and guidance to learners on hairdressing programmes.** Learners confide in their assessors concerning their social and emotional needs, as well as their training needs. The training salon has a strong teamwork ethic. The use of peer group support contributes to the high levels of guidance given. Learners develop satisfactory practical skills. IN2work has a good trainer to learner ratio, allowing for good supervision of practical activities. Trainers offer valuable encouragement to the learners, **although the pace of training is often slow**, with insufficient challenges for learners.

30. **Health and social care learners receive good training in their work placements.** Employers provide learners with the opportunity to develop good practical skills and relate the background knowledge to practical care settings. Many employers provide additional learning opportunities, which lead to nationally recognised certification. IN2work provides good continuation of learning through nurseries that remain open throughout the summer period.

31. **All foundation programmes demonstrate a lot of good teaching practice.** Of the 11 observed teaching sessions, 73 per cent were graded good or better. Trainers are knowledgeable and enthusiastic about their subject area. Some sessions make good use of activity-based learning which fully engages the learners. Training sessions are generally well planned. Learners develop new skills during their training and comment on the skills they have gained since attending training sessions. Observed jobsearch training sessions were well prepared. Observed sessions in other foundation areas were satisfactory.

32. Assessment on construction programmes is frequent and effective, and satisfactory on hairdressing programmes. **On engineering and business programmes, it is insufficient to meet the needs of the learners and for retailing and health and social care learners there is some poor practice.** Progress reviews are satisfactory on business administration and hairdressing programmes. **In all other areas, the reviews were considered to be weak or inadequate.**

33. All learners have their literacy and numeracy skills assessed as part of the thorough initial assessment process. **Construction and hairdressing programmes provide good support for identified needs and learners find it effective.** For all other programmes basic skills needs are supported satisfactory.

Leadership and management

34. The organisation has recovered successfully from very serious financial difficulties in 2002 and early 2003. An experienced financial manager was appointed who helped to establish an accurate analysis of the extent of the problems. **Subsequently, financial management systems and management review of the business have improved.**

35. **There is good development of external partnerships,** networks and contacts, including links with employers. IN2work has systematically targeted partnering activities as a key management priority activity. This has led to successful collaboration with a range of external partners. Working with partners has enabled the company to meet its aims to work with groups of clients with specific needs.

36. **IN2work has a well-established policy for staff training and development.** A plan is drawn up and published. This effectively sets out a range of options and provides opportunities in a wide range of topics and training methods. The plan and the development activities are reviewed and there is effective evaluation of training. Staff are well trained and have a positive approach to their own development. They have been involved regularly in effective development activities that support their work with learners.

37. **IN2work has good arrangements for promoting equality of opportunity.** It has a good comprehensive equal opportunities policy which is communicated to learners and employers. IN2work promotes its training provision to a wide range of external organisations. Staff have a good level of awareness of IN2work's equality of opportunity policy and use its principles effectively in their area of learning. There is relevant and frequent staff training in many aspects of support for equality of opportunity. **However, the collection of learners' data is not systematic and routine and does not extend beyond contractual compliance.** Data are not analysed and used as performance indicators and to set targets to widen the participation of different groups of learners.

38. The leadership and management of the training programmes in most areas are satisfactory. Recent changes to the local management of programmes have led to action plans being developed and there is clear evidence of improvements taking effect. **However, in construction, leadership and management are weak** and training centre approval has only recently been reinstated nine months after it was withdrawn. **The management of work placements does not sufficiently focus on employment and the level of training for many construction learners is not appropriate.**

39. **Internal verification is weak in foundation programmes** but satisfactory in all other areas, although the procedures have not identified some poor assessment practices. The self-assessment report is reasonably accurate. The report is used to help in the development and improvement of the provision. Supporting evidence is used effectively but some key weaknesses were not identified.

40. There were no formally documented strategic objectives for IN2work and no means of measuring progress towards longer-term priorities. These matters are being rectified, but at the time of inspection there was no clear resolution. There are now documents,

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board minutes and other information which describe corporate aims and the direction planned for IN2work. The values and working culture of the organisation is being articulated and identified through this process. This is effective and is supporting the successful recovery plan.

The following strengths and weaknesses were identified during this inspection:

Leadership and management

Strengths

- successful short-term recovery plan
- good external partnerships
- good promotion of equal opportunities
- good staff development

Weaknesses

- lack of formalised strategic objectives
- some poor premises and facilities
- inadequate use of equal opportunities data

Construction

Strengths

- good work placements
- frequent and effective workplace assessment
- good support for learners with additional learning needs

Weaknesses

- low achievement rates
- weak monitoring of progress
- some poor learning resources
- weak programme co-ordination

Engineering, technology & manufacturing

Strengths

- good achievement of additional qualifications
- good work placements

Weaknesses

- insufficient workplace assessment
- inadequate progress reviews

Business administration, management & professional

Strengths

- wide range of good work placements
- good employer support for training

Weaknesses

- low achievement and retention rates
- insufficient assessment
- insufficient off-the-job training

Retailing, customer service & transportation

Strengths

- good on-the-job training
- effective personal development of learners
- good support for learners

Weaknesses

- poor achievement rates in modern apprenticeship and New Deal programmes
- some poor assessment practice
- weak progress reviews

Hairdressing & beauty therapy

Strengths

- very good retention and achievement rates for level 2 NVQ programmes
- good work placements
- excellent support and guidance for learners

Weaknesses

- inadequate feedback for learners
- insufficient opportunities to maintain commercial competencies
- poor professional working practices in off-the-job training

Health, social care & public services

Strengths

- good training in work placements
- thorough, effective initial assessment
- effective and flexible support for learners
- effective implementation of action-planning

Weaknesses

- poor achievement level
- some poor assessor practice

Foundation programmes

Strengths

- good progression for Life Skills learners
- very good retention rates for programme centre learners
- good achievement of additional qualifications
- significant amount of good teaching
- very good level of support for learners

Weaknesses

- poor achievement of NVQs at level 1
- poor retention and achievement rates for New Deal foundation clients
- weak progress reviews
- insufficient focus on outcomes for Life Skills and NVQ training programmes

WHAT LEARNERS LIKE ABOUT IN2WORK LIMITED:

- the excellent help and support
- realistic working environments
- good work placements
- individual attention and support from the assessors
- friendly and supportive staff
- having somebody in the workplace to discuss concerns with
- being treated as adults
- learning while working

WHAT LEARNERS THINK IN2WORK LIMITED COULD IMPROVE:

- the general level of professionalism during off-the-job training in hairdressing
- the range of activities and work at the training centre on study days
- planning of off-the-job training
- the state of the toilets and washrooms at the Stafford centre
- programme planning - to avoid repeating work completed on the Gateway programme

KEY CHALLENGES FOR IN2WORK LIMITED:

- further develop the quality assurance arrangements to cover all aspects of the provision
- develop and improve assessor practice throughout the provision
- improve the quality of progress reviews
- ensure the actions identified to improve the internal verification process are carried out
- develop strategies to improve retention and achievement rates
- use equality of opportunity data to set targets for widening participation

DETAILED INSPECTION FINDINGS

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Grade 3

The following strengths and weaknesses were identified during this inspection:

Strengths

- successful short-term recovery plan
- good external partnerships
- good promotion of equal opportunities
- good staff development

Weaknesses

- lack of formalised strategic objectives
- some poor premises and facilities
- inadequate use of equal opportunities data

41. IN2work has successfully recovered from the very serious financial difficulties it faced in 2002 and early 2003. Financial management systems and management review of the business have improved. The finance manager has recently become an executive member of the board of IN2work. Managers are able to manage budgets and make decisions based on good-quality information. The business is now in a sound financial position. The operational managers now all have a clear set of priorities and a well-informed analysis of performance in their areas of responsibility. There is an effective process in place to consult staff. Leadership is effective and good forward planning is under way to provide the basis for a coherent strategy. Managers have a clear focus on improving learners' achievements.

42. Good external partnerships are being developed together with networks and contacts, including employer links. IN2work has systematically targeted partnering activities as a key management priority which has led to successful collaboration with a range of external partners. This enables the company to meet its aim of working with groups of clients with specific needs. For example, there are successful partnerships with the local education authority (LEA) and the probation service, resulting in effective programmes of work for learners with specific needs. IN2work has successful alliances with a range of specialist support organisations and agencies to which staff refer learners for support. In some cases, representatives of these specialist services contribute directly to programmes for example in Life Skills. IN2work's activities with partners support the organisation's efforts to promote social inclusion and respond to the needs of a diverse group of learners.

43. IN2work has a well-established policy for staff training and development. A plan is drawn up and published. This effectively sets out a range of options covering topics and training methods ranging from formal courses to work shadowing. The plan and the

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development activities are reviewed and there is effective evaluation of training. Staff are well trained and have a positive approach towards their own development. Staff have good opportunities to discuss their needs with their manager both through normal contact and through the regular review of staff performance. Individual development plans are established having consideration for the needs of the business and the needs of the individual. IN2work is accredited as an Investor in People, this is a national standard for improving an organisation's performance through its people. IN2work works closely with the employment national training organisation. Job skills and standards that will form the basis for staff training and development towards the new learning and development standards are being reviewed. Opportunities for staff to update their occupational skills are always available but a small number of staff need further opportunities to update their knowledge and skills. Managers recognise that professional updating is required. The strategy for continuous professional development has been reviewed and new arrangements are currently in draft form.

44. IN2work supports the development of learners' literacy and numeracy skills satisfactorily. An effective set of arrangements is used by staff to assess learners on entry. Initial assessment is used to identify learning needs and any additional skills support needs. There is a support system and specialist teaching resources to ensure that learners' requirements for literacy and numeracy development are met.

45. IN2work has no formally documented strategic objectives and no means of measuring progress towards longer-term priorities. There has been a need for a formal strategic plan for some time. Business planning has also been unsatisfactory in the past. This problem is now being resolved. There are documents, board minutes and other information which describe corporate aims for the organisation. The values and working culture of the organisation are being articulated and identified through this process. The building of a strategic plan is under way. This is effective and is supporting the successful recovery plan.

46. Some premises and resources are of poor quality. The premises at Stafford are inappropriate for their current use. The facilities and resources in the workshops are not satisfactory for the training offered. Other facilities are satisfactory, but in some areas improvements in general maintenance and cleanliness are required to maintain professional standards. There is a firm commitment by the organisation to the improvement of premises, including the relocation of the Stafford centre in the current year.

Equality of opportunity

Contributory grade 3

47. IN2work has a good arrangement for promoting equality of opportunity. There is a comprehensive equal opportunities policy which is communicated to learners and employers. A pack is given to employers containing the policy, together with well-presented information about the complaints procedures and a well-designed work-placement evaluation document. Through this document, IN2work's staff effectively assess the employer about the appropriateness of their equal opportunity arrangements and their commitment to ensuring the wellbeing of the learner. The packs are

informative and contain positive imagery with clear and detailed statements about the responsibilities of IN2work and the employer. IN2work promotes its training provision to external organisations. For example, schools, voluntary and specialist organisations and the youth offending team.

48. The new operating procedures for New Deal 18-24, and young adults programmes are thorough and detailed, with extensive coverage of equal opportunities in all aspects of the training programmes. Customer care procedures are sensitive to the individual needs of the learner and indicate in clear statements the action that staff will take to support learners in a range of issues. For example, the procedure describing the support a learner requires in the workplace if there is an issue with the misuse of substances is particularly well detailed.

49. Induction material is of an appropriate level and covers the learners' rights and responsibilities. It provides a simple yet effective questionnaire as a means of checking learners' understanding.

50. Staff are well aware of the provider's equality of opportunity policy and use its principles effectively in their area of learning. IN2work's staff profile is broadly reflective of the community served by the training centres. There is relevant and frequent staff training in many aspects of support for equality of opportunity.

51. Action has been taken recently to improve workshop noticeboards through the display of positive imagery, the equal opportunities policy and a clear statement of the promotion and development of respect among learners and staff. Learners receive information about how to make complaints and how to recognise and deal with harassment or bullying. There is evidence that staff and learners have received appropriate, sensitive and timely action when complaints have been made.

52. The available data on learners are not systematically and routinely collected and do not extend beyond contractual compliance. Data are not analysed and used as performance indicators and to set targets with appropriate timescales for recruiting selected groups of learners.

53. The group responsible for equal opportunities stopped meeting and the development plan has not been updated for eight months. Equal opportunities is not a set agenda item during occupational staff meetings and there is little information or evaluative analysis of the gender, ethnicity and age of learners on IN2work's training programmes. However, in some cases, staff do identify issues which affect learners and discuss arrangements and actions to support individuals.

Quality assurance

Contributory grade 3

54. Managers are conducting effective improvement planning at IN2work. This is based on thorough self-assessment, external audits and feedback from quality assurance reports. Self-assessment is a well-established part of the quality assurance arrangements at IN2work. The recent self-assessment report is the sixth one produced. The process of

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self-assessment has been strengthened and improved. The most recent self-assessment report was based on a comprehensive internal inspection, supported by two external consultants. The process was based on the standards in the 'Common Inspection Framework'. Managers and teams have produced a detailed draft action plan. All staff are aware of these plans and are involved in the work of improvement.

55. In most areas of learning the improvements to planning have taken effect. This has been particularly noticeable in Jobcentre Plus, health, social care and public services, and hairdressing programmes. Targets are used effectively and benchmarking is being used to raise performance. IN2work has appointed a quality assurance manager who carries out detailed internal audits resulting in reports with action points for managers.

56. IN2work has a comprehensive quality assurance policy and procedures. They are well-presented and documented and arrangements cover all the main training activities. Internal verification systems are part of the arrangements and are working satisfactorily. Much of this work is new and began in late 2002. These quality assurance arrangements are reviewed and updated as required.

57. IN2work now applies effective financial management control principles to ensure cost-effective use of its resources. The finance director sets an appropriate company budget and, with other directors, oversees expenditure and income. This is closely monitored at monthly management meetings and all operational managers now have good-quality information to guide their decision-making. The management of resources is satisfactory.

58. The self-assessment report is, in most cases, a reasonably accurate assessment of the main strengths and weaknesses. The report is used effectively to inform development and improvement planning. The internal inspection, which forms the main element of self-assessment, is preceded by a consultation with all staff about the perceived strengths and weaknesses in their areas of learning. IN2work's staff, with assistance from two external consultants, carry out an intensive week-long inspection of all aspects of learning following the 'Common Inspection Framework'. The resulting report is well supported by evidence. Many of the judgements in the self-assessment report matched those of the inspection, but some key weaknesses were not identified. Interpretations and judgements relating to achievement data were not given sufficient analysis in the report.

59. Some of the quality assurance procedures are not applied consistently. For example, the quality assurance of progress reviews is not yet working consistently to the standard expected. Managers have identified this problem and work is in hand to remedy the situation. Internal verification procedures are being followed, but the actions to improve and standardise assessment practices have not had time to take effect. Not all staff are fully aware of the quality assurance arrangements. Staff training and induction programmes are in place to remedy this.

AREAS OF LEARNING

Construction

Grade 4

Programmes inspected	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Work-based learning for young people	18	4

The following strengths and weaknesses were identified during this inspection:

Strengths

- good work placements
- frequent and effective workplace assessment
- good support for learners with additional learning needs

Weaknesses

- low achievement rates
- weak monitoring of progress
- some poor learning resources
- weak programme co-ordination

Achievement and standards

60. Learners and clients acquire a very good level of practical skills and benefit from individual support by training staff. Those learners who are employed or on work placement have good portfolios which are well structured, with witness testimony, photographs and detailed descriptions of work tasks.

61. The achievement level of NVOs is poor. No learner has achieved a target qualification in the past three years. Approval to assess and award certificates was reinstated five weeks before the inspection, after a nine-month period where the awarding body had withdrawn centre approval. Certification and assessment has not been possible during this period. The retention rate for construction programmes is satisfactory, with a significant number of learners still in learning after one or two years on programme. The quality of work placements and employers is good and standards of work attained in the workplace are very good.

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The following tables show the achievement and retention rates available up to the time of the inspection.

LSC funded work-based learning																	
Foundation modern apprenticeships (FMA)	2002-03		2001-02		2000-01		1999-2000		1998-99								
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
	Number of starts			1													
Retained*			0														
Successfully completed			0														
Still in learning			0														

*retained learners are those who have stayed in learning for at least the planned duration of their training programmes, or have successfully completed their programme within the time allowed

LSC funded work-based learning																	
NVO Training	2002-03		2001-02		2000-01		1999-2000										
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
	Number of starts	10		16		1											
Retained*	1		8		0	0											
Successfully completed	0		0		0	0											
Still in learning	5		7		1	100											

*retained learners are those who have stayed in learning for at least the planned duration of their training programmes, or have successfully completed their programme within the time allowed

Jobcentre Plus funded programmes																	
New Deal 18-24	2003-04		2002-03		2001-02												
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
	Number of starts	2		42		167											
Retained*	0		4		34	20											
Planned learning completed	0		1		25	15											
Gained job	0		12		31	19											
Still in training	2		3		0	0											

*retained clients are those who have stayed in learning for at least the planned duration of their programme, or have successfully completed their programme within the time allowed, or who have gained employment during their time on the programme

Quality of education and training

62. Learners have good-quality work placements. They are chosen with the needs of the learner in mind, to increase their potential to gain employment. Learners work on high-specification housing projects and are regarded as valued members of the site teams. Learners are given the opportunity to complete tasks requiring high skill levels. For

example, one learner was carrying out complex roofing work on domestic housing involving the use of steel and timber. He was working on his own initiative assuming high levels of responsibility. Other learners often take responsibility for major parts of building or maintenance projects. Staff at the work placements are aware of the need to build learners' confidence and to provide them with pastoral support throughout their programmes.

63. Assessment in the workplace is frequent and effective. One member of staff has primary responsibility for visiting learners in the workplace to review progress, liaise with employers and carry out assessments. In addition to the well-planned and frequent assessment visits, learners are able to contact the assessor by mobile phone to request a visit when assessment opportunities occur. Assessment is well planned and learners receive good feedback which allows them to make steady progress.

64. Those learners who need it receive good support for literacy and numeracy skills. The initial assessment process measures learners' ability in basic and key skills. Learners also carry out a further background knowledge and practical joinery test to measure their aptitude. Good feedback is given about the test results, with clear recommendations for additional support. Support is given sensitively, many learners who have not done well in English and mathematics at school make good progress with IN2work. Learners' understanding is supported and developed by teaching basic skills in a vocational context which is directly related to the occupational skills.

65. All staff have good levels of occupational competence and either have, or are working towards, appropriate teaching, assessor or verifier qualifications.

66. Internal verification is satisfactory. The training centre has experienced considerable problems with the assessment and internal verification process resulting in withdrawal of centre approval. New systems have been developed which demonstrate monitoring and effective sampling of candidates and assessors, but these new systems have not been used for a sufficient period of time to judge their effectiveness.

67. Those learners who do not have a work placement or employment are poorly monitored. Many have little idea of their progress towards their qualification and some do not know what their qualification aim is. Learners have worked on many valuable activities in the training centre, but in a significant number of cases this is not formally accredited or recorded. Monitoring of attendance at off-the-job training is also weak. One learner has not had any off-the-job training recorded for eight months, attending the training centre only to complete timesheets. This has not been identified by progress reviews, or by quality assurance of registers or training records. Progress reviews do not routinely involve employers and few set measurable targets for achievement. Learners and employers do not always receive a copy of the review document.

68. Training facilities are not adequate at the Stafford centre. The room for background knowledge teaching is poorly decorated. Desks have drinks stains and graffiti and the room contains food and drink containers behind window grills and on the floor. There are posters on the wall, but the general appearance of the room is poor. This de-

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motivates learners. The wood-machining workshop, which is rarely used by learners, has a considerable amount of timber stored on workbenches and the floor markings to show walkways and prohibited areas are not clear. The main workshop has a thoroughfare passing through the middle of the practical area. People passing through the workshop often distract learners from their tasks.

Leadership and management

69. The co-ordination of activities in the construction section is weak. Centre approval was withdrawn after weak assessment practice and poor internal verification had been identified on several visits by the awarding body. The action taken to resolve these weaknesses was inadequate and the section took nine months to develop satisfactory systems. The management of work placements does not focus sufficiently on employment. Some learners have been on work placement for a considerable proportion of their training and are coming to the end of their programmes but are still employed by IN2work; the prospect of employment not yet discussed with employers. The level of programme for many learners is not appropriate. Some learners, whose initial assessment and previous experience show very good ability levels, are not working towards modern apprenticeships. Similarly, some learners who have had very limited work-placement experience are on NVOs which are difficult to achieve without significant experience in the workplace.

Engineering, technology & manufacturing**Grade 3**

Programmes inspected	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Work-based learning for young people	20	3
New Deal 18-24	1	None

The following strengths and weaknesses were identified during this inspection:

Strengths

- good achievement of additional qualifications
- good work placements

Weaknesses

- insufficient workplace assessment
- inadequate progress reviews

Achievement and standards

70. Learners' achievement of additional qualifications is good. Eighty-five per cent of learners achieved a national tyre fitting and repair qualification in 2000-01, 80 per cent achieved the qualification in 2001-02 and 100 per cent in 2002-03. Achievement of fire certificates for 2001-02 was 100 per cent. All learners achieved the St. John Ambulance's appointed person qualification in 2001-02. The pass rate for learners on the abrasive wheel course was 100 per cent for 2002-03.

71. The retention and achievement rates for New Deal 18-24 clients are poor. For the year 2001-02, of 19 learners, the retention rate was 11 per cent. No learner completed their planned learning, and only 5 per cent of learners gained employment. For the period 2002-03, of 18 learners, no learner completed their planned training, 11 per cent found employment and one learner remains in learning. The provision was subcontracted to another organisation and the programme is now withdrawn with recruitment no longer taking place.

72. For those learners working towards NVQ level 2, there is insufficient data for inspectors to make valid judgements about retention and achievement rates.

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The following tables show the achievement and retention rates available up to the time of the inspection.

LSC funded work-based learning																	
NVQ Training	2002-03		2001-02		2000-01		1999-2000										
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
	Number of starts	18		13		1		2									
Retained*	0		1		0	0	2	100									
Successfully completed	0		1		0	0	2	100									
Still in learning	15		5		0	0	0	0									

*retained learners are those who have stayed in learning for at least the planned duration of their training programmes, or have successfully completed their programme within the time allowed

Jobcentre Plus funded programmes																	
New Deal 18-24	2003-04		2002-03		2001-02												
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
	Number of starts			18		19											
Retained*			3		2	11											
Planned learning completed			0		0	0											
Gained job			2		1	5											
Still in training			1		0	0											

*retained clients are those who have stayed in learning for at least the planned duration of their programme, or have successfully completed their programme within the time allowed, or who have gained employment during their time on the programme

Quality of education and training

73. Learners have good work placements. They work in a range of motor vehicle companies from sole traders to national dealerships. Learners have access to a wide range of modern equipment and facilities at their work placements. They have excellent opportunities to develop skills at work and their supervisors provide appropriate support and guidance. Learners receive a thorough induction into the workplace from employers, who then continue to support them throughout their training. Supervisors are well qualified with considerable occupational experience. Some have a good understanding of the NVQ programme, having achieved the qualification themselves. Supervisors are keen and willing to pass on their knowledge to learners, who speak highly of their work placements.

74. Tutors give adequate background knowledge and practical training to learners in off-the-job sessions. There are some good training sessions using a wide range of learning activities to stimulate learners. However, in some sessions an NVQ study pack, demonstrations and videos are used effectively to support NVQ 2 learners. Teaching

rooms and workshops are poorly decorated and maintained.

75. The range and quality of specialist equipment in the motor vehicle workshops is adequate. There is a range of display and simulation rigs which adequately demonstrate most motor vehicle control and measurement systems. These are used effectively during training sessions in the garage and in the classroom. However, there are not enough complete vehicles for learners to work on. The recently introduced NVQ training package developed by the IN2work assessor effectively supports learning in the classroom and the workshop. IN2work has an adequately equipped computer suite for formal assessments and for enhancing the skills of the learners.

76. The assessment of learners' literacy and numeracy needs is satisfactory. Initial assessment is carried out during the learners' induction and individual support needs are appropriately identified. IN2work's staff ensure that all learners are placed on the correct qualification level. Basic skills support is given in class by a specialist tutor. Motor vehicle trainers and assessors give further appropriate support to learners when required. As learners work through their planned programmes, or move on to new levels of study, more assessments are carried out to identify if further support is required.

77. There is not enough workplace assessment for learners. Many learners' progress is heavily reliant on witness testimony and there is not enough observation or assessment in the workplace by the IN2work assessor. Some signatories to witness statements are not recorded in advance of assessments. Some learners have had no recorded assessments for over three months and there is slow progress towards achievement of the NVQ.

78. The progress reviews carried out by IN2work are inadequate. They are brief and do not cover sufficient technical detail. They are not used to set meaningful and relevant targets for on- and off-the-job training. Reviews are not used to monitor equal opportunities or health and safety issues. Employers are not directly involved in the review process and do not formally comment on the learners' progress. Most work-placement supervisors are not aware of the content of the learners' day-release training at IN2work. The progress review document prompts the reviewer to discuss a range of subjects, but reviews do not conform to these guidelines.

Leadership and management

79. Leadership and management for engineering programmes are satisfactory. Internal verification is satisfactory, although the verification of the assessor in the workplace is restricted by insufficient workplace assessments. Learners' portfolios are frequently assessed throughout the programme and the verifier gives constructive feedback to the assessor. Verification documentation closely follows the requirements of the awarding body and long-term verification plans are in place.

80. IN2work has set targets for the development of level 3 NVQ training and has analysed the resources needed. The motor vehicle training team has effective control of its day-to-day spending. Team meetings take place every month to discuss budgets,

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recruitment, performance data and targets. The motor vehicle trainers value these meetings and feel more involved in the decision-making process at IN2work.

Business administration, management & professional**Grade 4**

Programmes inspected	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Work-based learning for young people	34	4

The following strengths and weaknesses were identified during this inspection:

Strengths

- wide range of good work placements
- good employer support for training

Weaknesses

- low achievement and retention rates
- insufficient assessment
- insufficient off-the-job training

Achievement and standards

81. The standard of learners' work on business administration programmes is satisfactory. Learners are able to gather evidence for their portfolio efficiently and to make good progress. Learner's portfolios contain many examples of witness testimony provided by line managers and other work-placement staff. However, some learners are unaware of the progress they are making.

82. Achievement and retention rates for all programmes are poor. For foundation modern apprentices (FMAs) there were no successful completions of the apprenticeship framework in 2000-01 and only 23 per cent in 2001-02, with two learners still in training. Retention rates for FMAs are 20 per cent for 2001-02, all other years have learners still in training. For NVQ training 38 per cent of learners achieved the target qualification in 1999-2000, and 41 per cent in 2000-01, all other years have learners still in training. Retention rates for NVQ learners are 38 per cent for 1999-2000 and 41 per cent for 2000-01.

83. For New Deal 18-24, of the clients who started in 2001-02, 43 per cent were retained, 29 per cent completed their planned learning programmes and 29 per cent found jobs.

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The following tables show the achievement and retention rates available up to the time of the inspection.

LSC funded work-based learning																
Advanced modern apprenticeships (AMA)	2002-03		2001-02		2000-01		1999-2000									
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
	Number of starts	1		1		1		5								
Retained*	0		0	0	0		0	0								
Successfully completed	0		0	0	0		0	0								
Still in learning	1		0	0	0		0	0								

*retained learners are those who have stayed in learning for at least the planned duration of their training programmes, or have successfully completed their programme within the time allowed

LSC funded work-based learning																
Foundation modern apprenticeships (FMA)	2002-03		2001-02		2000-01		1999-2000									
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
	Number of starts	24		26		5		2								
Retained*	0		7		1	20	0	0								
Successfully completed	0		6		0	0	0	0								
Still in learning	13		2		0	0	0	0								

*retained learners are those who have stayed in learning for at least the planned duration of their training programmes, or have successfully completed their programme within the time allowed

LSC funded work-based learning																
NVQ Training	2002-03		2001-02		2000-01		1999-2000									
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
	Number of starts	28		55		27		8								
Retained*	1		19		11	41	3	38								
Successfully completed	0		16		9	33	3	38								
Still in learning	16		2		0	0	0	0								

*retained learners are those who have stayed in learning for at least the planned duration of their training programmes, or have successfully completed their programme within the time allowed

Jobcentre Plus funded programmes																
New Deal 18-24																
	2003-04		2002-03		2001-02											
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number of starts	2		23		14											
Retained*	0		4		6	43										
Planned learning completed	0		4		4	29										
Gained job	0		6		4	29										
Still in training	2		6		0	0										

*retained clients are those who have stayed in learning for at least the planned duration of their programme, or have successfully completed their programme within the time allowed, or who have gained employment during their time on the programme

Quality of education and training

84. IN2work has developed a wide range of good work placements which reflect the local economy and include work placements in the public sector, financial services, manufacturing, legal services, retailing and estate agents. Work placements offer good opportunities for learners to gather evidence towards the target NVQ. The roles and responsibilities held by learners contribute to the development of interpersonal skills and self-esteem. For example, one learner has a role in monitoring police activity in Staffordshire. Another learner is involved in helping to organise conferences and a music festival. Employers value the contributions which learners make to company tasks and projects, and in the last 12 months a large number of work placements have become permanent full-time jobs.

85. Employers are supportive of training, and welcome IN2work's staff to their premises as part of a pattern of regular visits to support learners' progress. Not all employers are familiar with the requirements of competency-based qualifications, but all the employers interviewed appreciate and support the need for staff to be competent in their job roles. Some employers have personal experience of NVQs, and some have achieved assessor qualifications. Employers find this useful in discussions with learners and their assessors about the requirements of the NVQ. Most employers attend the progress reviews and find them effective in identifying how best to allocate duties and roles to learners. Where a need for off-the-job training is identified, for example in the area of key skills, release from the work placement is normally agreed and supported. Some employers also provide time during the week for learners to complete tasks relating to their NVQ.

86. The resources available to deliver administration programmes are adequate. Learning materials to support learning are available at all sites and are current and satisfactory. Staff have satisfactory qualifications and experience and there are frequent opportunities for training and gaining further qualifications. The delivery of information technology (IT) training is currently affected by insufficient numbers of experienced staff. This has been recognised by the company in its self-assessment report and the action

plan for this occupational area includes measures to resolve this issue.

87. Arrangements to assess learners' basic skills are satisfactory, as is the standard of literacy and numeracy demonstrated by learners in the occupational area. Basic skills tests are used effectively to identify weaknesses which could disadvantage learners in developing occupational skills. The assessments are used to identify appropriate additional support for learners, and support requirements are recorded on individual learning plans. A well-resourced specialist unit carries out satisfactory support through relevant tasks and tests.

88. Learners' progress reviews are satisfactory, with planned visits to the workplace by assessors. There is an appropriate level of support from the learners' line managers or supervisors who are effectively involved in the review process. The document on which the outcome of the review process is recorded is being revised to provide improved structure and clarity in the review process. It has not yet been used in the learners' progress reviews.

89. There is not enough assessment of the tasks completed by learners and their evidence of competence. Many of the learners' portfolios contain evidence which has been gathered in response to assessment planning, but which has not been assessed. Learners are uncertain of their progress, and many that leave the programme early do so without being credited with individual NVQ unit certification. Of learners currently on modern apprenticeship or NVQ programmes for more than six months, 39 per cent have had no units fully signed off by assessors. Across sites there is a strong emphasis on what is termed holistic assessment, but this emphasis is operating to the disadvantage of many learners working towards both NVQ and key skills units.

90. There is not enough off-the-job training to support learners' progress. The time allocated to off-the-job training is mainly used to support the updating and completion of learners' portfolios, and insufficient time is given to learning new skills that can be further developed in the workplace. Few learners attend off-the-job training on a regular basis. Assessor staff are aware of the training being provided by employers in the work placement, but there is little evidence that this knowledge is used to identify and inform off-the-job support training. IN2work's staff consider their role to be primarily assessors, rather than trainers. There is clear evidence, however, that this perception is changing, with the need to prepare to teach training in support of the recently introduced technical certificates.

Leadership and management

91. The occupational area has experienced a number of changes in management personnel recently and insufficient attention has been given to the monitoring and evaluation of learner performance. There are, however, clear indications that management strategies are in place to resolve these issues, strategies that include clear performance targets, and the review of staff responsibilities. Following a recent internal inspection, a comprehensive action plan has been agreed, and is being implemented.

92. Internal verification is satisfactory. There is an internal verification policy and a sampling strategy that is understood by all relevant staff. The responsibility for internal verification is clear and verifying staff have appropriate qualifications and occupational experience. An internal verifier observes all assessors at least once during a contract year, and clear written feedback is provided, following the sampling of portfolios and the observation of assessment. Where necessary, action points are agreed.

Retailing, customer service & transportation**Grade 4**

Programmes inspected	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Work-based learning for young people	63	4

The following strengths and weaknesses were identified during this inspection:

Strengths

- good on-the-job training
- effective personal development of learners
- good support for learners

Weaknesses

- poor achievement rates in modern apprenticeship and New Deal programmes
- some poor assessment practice
- weak progress reviews

Achievement and standards

93. On-the-job training of learners in the workplace is good. Much of this training is incremental, and learners graduate to more complex and responsible tasks over time. Some learners have shown sufficient potential to be trained in tasks which would normally be outside their routine job roles. Many learners also benefit from relevant in-company training with their employers or work-placement providers, such as basic supervisor training. Some employers also use learners' assessment plans as a template for planning short-term learner training, in line with the appropriate NVQ.

94. Achievement rates are poor in modern apprenticeship and New Deal programmes. Of the two learners who started on the advanced modern apprenticeship (AMA) programme in 1999-2000, one has left without having completed the framework. The other learner is making slow progress and is still in training 12 months after the expected completion of the programme. Thirty-seven learners have started on the FMA programme in the past four years, of whom 13 are still in training. No learners have successfully completed their framework.

95. There is better achievement in NVQ programmes. All four learners who began programmes in 1999-2000 successfully achieved their qualifications. This level of achievement has not been maintained in subsequent years, with only 50 per cent of the 14 NVQ learners in 2000-01 successfully achieving their qualifications. In the 2001-02 programme year, 55 per cent of learners left without completing the planned programme duration or achieving a qualification, 15 learners have so far successfully achieved the qualification and one learner is still in training.

96. For New Deal clients who started in 2001-02, the achievement rate is poor. Of the

28 clients who started New Deal programmes, eight gained jobs and one completed the planned learning programme.

The following tables show the achievement and retention rates available up to the time of the inspection.

LSC funded work-based learning																
Advanced modern apprenticeships (AMA)	2002-03		2001-02		2000-01		1999-2000									
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
	Number of starts	2						2								
Retained*	0						1	50								
Successfully completed	0						0	0								
Still in learning	2						1	50								

*retained learners are those who have stayed in learning for at least the planned duration of their training programmes, or have successfully completed their programme within the time allowed

LSC funded work-based learning																
Foundation modern apprenticeships (FMA)	2002-03		2001-02		2000-01		1999-2000									
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
	Number of starts	13		12		7		5								
Retained*	0		1		5	71	2	40								
Successfully completed	0		0		0	0	0	0								
Still in learning	8		5		0	0	0	0								

*retained learners are those who have stayed in learning for at least the planned duration of their training programmes, or have successfully completed their programme within the time allowed

LSC funded work-based learning																
NVQ Training	2002-03		2001-02		2000-01		1999-2000									
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
	Number of starts	65		36		14		4								
Retained*	1		15		7	50	4	100								
Successfully completed	0		15		7	50	4	100								
Still in learning	46		1		0	0	0	0								

*retained learners are those who have stayed in learning for at least the planned duration of their training programmes, or have successfully completed their programme within the time allowed

Jobcentre Plus funded programmes																
New Deal 18-24																
	2003-04		2002-03		2001-02											
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number of starts	13		147		28											
Retained*	0		28		2	7										
Planned learning completed	0		27		1	4										
Gained job	0		40		8	29										
Still in training	13		12		0	0										

*retained clients are those who have stayed in learning for at least the planned duration of their programme, or have successfully completed their programme within the time allowed, or who have gained employment during their time on the programme

Quality of education and training

97. Learners receive effective personal development during their time on programme. In addition to developing valuable job skills, learners also achieve considerable development of their personal skills and qualities. They gain in confidence and maturity, and relate more effectively to customers through improved customer communication skills. They become more responsible in their approach to work. Some learners have been given responsibilities additional to their individual job roles. For example, learners are involved in the ordering of stock, checking and payment of accounts, and making sure good housekeeping is maintained in their section of the retailing outlet. One learner has become involved in helping to develop a new computer-based payments system for their employer.

98. Learners receive good support both on and off the job. They have very good support from work-placement providers for on-the-job training and motivational support. For example, learners receive good-quality instruction and coaching in such activities as tagging of goods for sale, stock control, replenishment and displays, and till operation, as well as dealing and communicating with customers. Employers have a genuine interest in learners' development and progress, and encourage learners in their programme work. The support provided for learners by IN2work's staff is also good. They take time and put in a good deal of effort to ensure that learners understand what is expected of them. Learners consider their assessors to be extremely helpful and encouraging of their progress. Some learners have assessors' mobile telephone numbers, to be able to contact them at short notice if they have a problem relating to their learning programme, or need support and guidance.

99. The induction procedures are satisfactory. All learners are given an induction, which includes an overview of their target qualification and the general NVO process. Health and safety is discussed, along with the basic aspects of equal opportunities. Learners also receive a separate and discrete induction to their work-placement organisations.

100. Off-the-job training is satisfactory, and in the main, takes the form of individual coaching of learners in the workplace. Learners on work placement are also able to attend their local IN2work centre for training sessions. These are used for portfolio-building and the development of learners' key skills or for jobsearch training with New Deal clients.

101. The level of basic skills support is satisfactory. A basic skills specialist employed by IN2work provides most of the support. This consists of off-the-job training sessions, in group and individual sessions. Some basic skills support is also provided by assessors in the workplace. All staff involved have appropriate qualifications.

102. Learning resources are satisfactory. The number of assessors and internal verifiers within the occupational area is adequate to meet the needs of learners. Accommodation at IN2work centres is of a satisfactory standard. Some well-reproduced learning materials about retailing legislation are provided to learners, although the overall range of such materials is limited. All learners have induction programmes at IN2work and at their work placements. The inductions include a clear emphasis on health and safety issues. The maintenance of health and safety is regularly monitored through the learners' progress reviews.

103. There are some poor assessment practices. During some assessment sessions assessors carry out coaching of the learners. The learners are unclear whether they are being assessed or trained by the assessor. Feedback about learners' completed work is limited. In many instances the work is merely confirmed by the signature of the assessor or marked 'good example'. Where clarification of learners' written work is sought, questions and answers are not always recorded either on the piece of work being assessed or elsewhere within the evidence base. Assessment plans do not always detail the element that the required evidence relates to and invariably identify only the unit number being completed. This does not provide the learner with a clear understanding of which elements of the unit they are completing.

104. Progress reviews are weak. Target-setting during the progress review is poor. The targets are not always specific, with timescales. They sometimes refer to an attempt to complete an activity and are not sufficiently challenging to engage the learner. The progress review process does not reinforce the learners' understanding of their qualification and rarely checks their knowledge of equality and diversity, or the appeals process. Written statements by the reviewer are not sufficiently detailed to reflect the three-month period under review. Use of the individual learning plans is inconsistent. The plan is maintained in the learners' file held by the assessor. The learners do not have ready access to this and cannot easily identify their progress to date. Progress against the programme targets is not always established and no reference is made to whether the learner is making sufficient progress. The employers are not always involved in the review process and do not sufficiently understand the learners' progress. The planning of on-the-job training is not as effective as it could be. The use of review forms is not consistent and the training and support log does not record reviews effectively.

105. Management of the area of learning is satisfactory. The organisation has had significant staff and management changes within the past year. Managers of the occupational area have identified issues which previously affected performance within the department. A new strategy, planned to improve quality assurance in respect of staff occupational competence and updating has been implemented. Occupational area managers have identified inconsistencies and inadequacies in assessors' practice, and measures have recently been introduced to improve the review process. These measures have not had time to affect performance. Staff appraisal focuses on self-development. The measurement of performance is not effective and there are no management information systems to provide staff with levels of learner achievement and retention.

106. Internal verification is satisfactory. Records show frequent, ongoing sampling of learners' portfolios, as well as observation of assessors and interviewing of learners. These records are very detailed and thorough. Monthly standardisation meetings are held with assessors, but the focus on standardisation of assessors' decisions is unclear.

Hairdressing & beauty therapy**Grade 3**

Programmes inspected	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Work-based learning for young people	19	3

The following strengths and weaknesses were identified during this inspection:

Strengths

- very good retention and achievement rates for level 2 NVQ programmes
- good work placements
- excellent support and guidance for learners

Weaknesses

- inadequate feedback for learners
- insufficient opportunities to maintain commercial competencies
- poor professional working practices in off-the-job training

Achievement and standards

107. Learners' practical work is satisfactory. They carry out junior salon duties at their work placements, some operating with their own regular clients. Level 1 NVQ learners in the training salon assist level 2 learners effectively. Learners have satisfactory background knowledge to support their practical activities. Level 2 NVQ learners achieve good results.

108. During 1999-2000, of the 11 learners enrolled, 73 per cent gained their full NVQ. In 2000-01, of the 10 learners who started the programme, 80 per cent achieved their qualification. Nine learners enrolled on FMA programmes in 2001-02 and 2002-03, of which seven are still in training. NVQ unit completion is progressing well for those learners still in training, with many learners having only two units to complete before the end of their programmes, well within their planned length of stay.

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The following tables show the achievement and retention rates available up to the time of the inspection.

LSC funded work-based learning																	
Foundation modern apprenticeships (FMA)	2002-03		2001-02		2000-01		1999-2000										
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
	Number of starts	4		5													
Retained*	0		0														
Successfully completed	0		0														
Still in learning	4		3														

*retained learners are those who have stayed in learning for at least the planned duration of their training programmes, or have successfully completed their programme within the time allowed

LSC funded work-based learning																	
NVO Training	2002-03		2001-02		2000-01		1999-2000										
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
	Number of starts	10		11		10		11									
Retained*	1		2		10	100	11	100									
Successfully completed	0		2		8	80	8	73									
Still in learning	9		3		0	0	0	0									

*retained learners are those who have stayed in learning for at least the planned duration of their training programmes, or have successfully completed their programme within the time allowed

Jobcentre Plus funded programmes																	
New Deal 18-24	2003-04		2002-03		2001-02												
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
	Number of starts			1		2											
Retained*			0		0	0											
Planned learning completed			0		0	0											
Gained job			0		1	50											
Still in training			0		0	0											

*retained clients are those who have stayed in learning for at least the planned duration of their programme, or have successfully completed their programme within the time allowed, or who have gained employment during their time on the programme

Quality of education and training

109. IN2work find good work placements for the learners. Most learners are placed in a salon for one day each week. In some instances, learners are in work placements for four days each week. Employers have effective communication with the provider and many telephone the provider to ask questions about their learner's abilities and skills.

Salon placements offer the learners a valuable insight into commercial hairdressing. Many of the learners are employed by their work-placement salon at the end of their training programme.

110. Training assessors give excellent support and guidance to learners. Learners confide in their assessors about their social and emotional needs, as well as their training needs. Additional monthly sessions are scheduled into the programme to give the learners guidance in range of issues. For example, effective contraception advice and jobsearch skills. The learners value these sessions. There is a strong team work ethic throughout the training salon. Level 1 NVQ learners work alongside level 2 learners, working as salon juniors effectively, using their initiative to assist their group members. The use of peer group support also contributes to the high level of guidance available.

111. The assessment of learners' literacy and numeracy skills during induction is adequate. On completion of the three-day induction period, the learners are placed on the most appropriate programme. During their induction learners carry out training in generic health and safety issues, as well as equal opportunities. Those learners interviewed were unable to place equal opportunities issues in a hairdressing context. Equal opportunities were not emphasised during the period after induction.

112. Learners' basic skills are satisfactory. Completed assignment work is of a satisfactory standard. Most of the work is word-processed, with the learners using the computers to check their accuracy. However, one key skills assignment has been extensively altered by the tutor and reissued to the learner to amend. This does not identify any basic skill requirements and will not help to raise this learner's level of skill.

113. Key skills training for the FMAs is satisfactory. Where possible it is related to hairdressing. This avoids the learners having to duplicate work for assessment. Key skills training is given in the salon by a key skills tutor. The scheduling of the teaching is less than satisfactory. Teaching sessions are irregular and one learner who has been on programme for nine months is yet to start the key skills element. However, other **foundation modern apprentices** are making good progress with their portfolios. **Because no learners have completed the FMA, it is not possible to judge the effect of key skills training.**

114. Learners develop satisfactory practical skills. Off-the-job training takes place in a training salon environment, with client sessions scheduled throughout the week. There is a good trainer to learner ratio, allowing for good supervision of practical activities. Trainers offer valuable encouragement to the learners, although the pace of training is often slow with insufficient challenge given to those learners practising their skills.

115. Progress reviews are satisfactory. There is a strong focus on pastoral support and guidance. Work-placement providers are encouraged to be part of the review process. Reviews take place sometimes as regularly as every four weeks, depending on the needs of the learners. All reviews take place within a 12-week period. Targets are set for NVQ unit completion, although these are not monitored against the learners' progress. Learners are, however, making good progress in achieving their NVQ units and full

qualifications. Learners receive a personal copy of their review for reference.

116. Feedback during practical work is unsatisfactory. For those learners not undergoing an assessment, feedback is minimal and does not adequately allow the learner to appraise their skill level or identify future training needs. IN2work assessors visit the work placements and conduct training reviews on site. Practical skills and units are assessed during the off-the-job training, but some learners are not confident enough to offer these services during the on-the-job training. For example, two learners had completed their unit on setting, but neither learner was performing these duties in placement because of their lack of confidence with the final brushing out of the set. Such needs were not identified by the learners' training reviews. Background knowledge delivery is effective in meeting the needs of the learners. Trainers are able to deliver training at the appropriate level and structure the delivery in manageable blocks of learning. Learners complete written work to the appropriate standard for their NVO assignments. However, the written feedback about assignments is inadequate. Marked work often only carries the assessor's signature. This does not give the learners the opportunity to consider how they could improve. Neither does it effectively praise good work. One learner submitted completed work for marking several months ago and has not yet received feedback as to the standard of work.

117. There are insufficient opportunities in the training centre to maintain commercial competences. Learners use professional hair products, although the range is limited. Learners gain a greater insight into product ranges at their work placements. Large resource items are poor. There are only two hood dryers, one client had to have her hair dried with a hand-held dryer. Commercial resources such as heat accelerators for use with colouring are not available. There are not enough clients for off-the-job training to effectively support learning. Retailing and promotional sales training is limited with learners having a poor understanding of the commercial importance of this area. All items of small equipment, such as hairdryers, setting rollers and scissors are supplied by the salon and there are sufficient for the number of learners on programme.

118. Learners are taught poor professional working practices during off-the-job training sessions. Not enough attention is given to levels of professionalism within the salon. Poor levels of hygiene and a general lack of effective housekeeping were evident. Learners' knowledge of sterilisation is poor. Within the salon two methods of sterilisation are used, both incorrectly.

Leadership and management

119. The management of the hairdressing provision is satisfactory. There have been recent changes in the overall co-ordination of on- and off-the-job training and this is now working well. Since IN2work's final round of self-assessment it is evident that there is a commitment to improve. Strategies have been implemented to resolve weaknesses and the improvements are beginning to show. Internal verification is satisfactory. Both written and practical assessments are taken and valuable written feedback is logged. There is a commitment to staff development in raising trainers' level of knowledge. Recent staff training and development has been carried out in key skills integration and

drug awareness. Learners are aware of the appeals procedure should they need to access this.

Health, social care & public services**Grade 3**

Programmes inspected	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Work-based learning for young people	72	3
New Deal 18-24	3	None

The following strengths and weaknesses were identified during this inspection:

Strengths

- good training in work placements
- thorough, effective initial assessment
- effective and flexible support for learners
- effective implementation of action-planning

Weaknesses

- poor achievement level
- some poor assessor practice

Achievement and standards

120. Learners acquire good practical skills in the workplace. Portfolios are well presented and contain good-quality evidence. Learners are making good progress in their programmes and achieving a satisfactory range of additional qualifications.

121. The achievement rate for modern apprenticeship frameworks is poor. Few learners complete their framework within the time identified in their individual learning plans. The management of IN2work has identified this and action has been taken to improve retention and achievement rates. For programmes with learners still in training retention and achievement rates are improving significantly. Nineteen FMA and NVO learners have completed their objectives since January 2003. Learners are progressing from foundation level to level 2 NVO programmes and a small number of learners have progressed to level 3 NVO programmes. Most learners progress into employment.

122. There are only three learners on New Deal programmes. In 2001-02, 59 per cent of learners completed their planned learning and 27 per cent found employment.

The following tables show the achievement and retention rates available up to the time of the inspection.

LSC funded work-based learning																	
Advanced modern apprenticeships (AMA)	2002-03		2001-02		2000-01												
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
	Number of starts	1		4		3											
Retained*	0		0		2												
Successfully completed	0		0		0												
Still in learning	1		3		0												

*retained learners are those who have stayed in learning for at least the planned duration of their training programmes, or have successfully completed their programme within the time allowed

LSC funded work-based learning																	
Foundation modern apprenticeships (FMA)	2002-03		2001-02		2000-01		1999-2000										
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
	Number of starts	15		23		7		4									
Retained*	0		7		4		2	50									
Successfully completed	0		1		0		0	0									
Still in learning	12		11		1		0	0									

*retained learners are those who have stayed in learning for at least the planned duration of their training programmes, or have successfully completed their programme within the time allowed

LSC funded work-based learning																	
NVQ Training	2002-03		2001-02		2000-01		1999-2000										
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
	Number of starts	46		51		38		16									
Retained*	0		15		16		12	75									
Successfully completed	0		10		11		8	50									
Still in learning	35		7		2		0	0									

*retained learners are those who have stayed in learning for at least the planned duration of their training programmes, or have successfully completed their programme within the time allowed

Jobcentre Plus funded programmes																
New Deal 18-24																
	2003-04		2002-03		2001-02											
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number of starts	1		34		22											
Retained*	0		6		13	59										
Planned learning completed	0		6		13	59										
Gained job	1		6		6	27										
Still in training	0		3		0	0										

*retained clients are those who have stayed in learning for at least the planned duration of their programme, or have successfully completed their programme within the time allowed, or who have gained employment during their time on the programme

Quality of education and training

123. Learners receive good training in work placements. Employers provide learners with the opportunity to develop practical skills and relate the background knowledge to practical care settings. Many employers provide additional learning opportunities, a significant number of which lead to the award of nationally recognised certificates. In one placement, learners have had off-the-job training from the employer on manual handling, and continence management. Other learners had received training in the identification and handling of abuse. Some employers keep a detailed list of the training carried out by the learners. Learners acquire good practical skills in the workplace. All employers give an induction programme and learners are supervised by senior staff. Where learners are receiving training in schools, IN2work provide good continuation of training throughout the school closure in nurseries which remain open throughout the summer period.

124. Learners have a thorough and effective initial assessment of their basic and key skills. This is supplemented by assessment of their understanding of their vocational area. Learners have the opportunity to spend up to eight weeks in each area of care before deciding on their work placement. A group meeting involving the care sector manager, enrolment officer, potential assessor and basic skills specialist takes place to ensure the correct programme of learning is planned for learners and all staff are aware of each learners' needs. Good use is made of accreditation of prior learning for NVQs and key skills qualifications. The findings of initial assessment accurately inform the detailed and well-presented learning plans.

125. Support for learners is effective and flexible, learners are able to contact IN2work staff when additional support and guidance is required. Learners speak highly of the support offered. The additional training of staff in counselling has improved the quality of support available for learners. Frequent visits to learners in the workplace provide additional support for those learners with identified additional needs. Support with portfolio-building and development of background knowledge is available at IN2work for

all learners.

126. Off-the-job training is satisfactory. Learners receive appropriate training by vocationally experienced staff. Lessons are well paced and learners are encouraged to evaluate their working practices. Literacy and numeracy support is satisfactory. Attendance is good and learners find the teaching sessions useful for their daily activities and NVQ training.

127. The quality of resources available at the two centres visited was variable. All learners are provided with a learning pack about induction and when inducted to the NVQ, they are provided with a personal copy of an appropriate textbook. The training centre at Tamworth is a modern building on a small industrial estate. The building is not accessible for people with mobility difficulties. There is no access inside the building to the second floor rooms in which training is carried out for health and care programmes. The training centre in Burton-On-Trent is a part of an old school. Access to the building is good. Access to teaching and training rooms is poor for learners with mobility difficulties. Learners have contributed work to displays around the walls in both training centres and these contributions enhance the appearance of the training areas.

128. Some assessment practices are poor. In one residential setting, an assessment meeting with a learner was to have taken place in a resident's bedroom, an example of unacceptable care practice. In the same premises the meeting with the learner took place in a public area; during the visit conversations and telephone conversations were conducted by staff and visiting social workers, within hearing of the assessor, which did not respect the residents' rights to confidentiality of the residents. The assessor did not address these issues with the learner, or identify the poor practice taking place.

Leadership and management

129. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The recent organisational restructuring of management has led to changes in the management and monitoring systems in the area of health and social care. The impact of changes on the quality of support and monitoring of learners' progress is now beginning to have a positive impact on the quality of learning opportunity provided. The internal verification process has identified slow completion of learners' work at unit level.

130. The action plan is being effectively implemented to improve learners' progress. The new initiatives to improve learners' progress are having a direct effect on the improvement of retention and achievement rates. Retention and achievement rates are improving significantly. Nineteen FMA and NVQ learners have completed their qualifications since January 2003. Learners are progressing from foundation level to level 2 NVQ programmes and a small number of learners have progressed to level 3 NVQ programmes.

131. All staff now emphasise the continuous improvement of training programmes to meet the individual needs of learners. Over the past eight months, five staff have attended a total of 15 days external training. This has included training for staff in the

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delivery of key skills training, vocational assessor training, basic counselling, drug awareness and health and safety. One member of staff is also working on the advanced counselling award.

132. The development of individual learning plans is variable, and targets set for learners are not always clear to them. Recent changes in the internal verification process place greater emphasis on target-setting and action-planning.

Foundation programmes**Grade 3**

Programmes inspected	Number of learners	Contributory grade
New Deal 18-24	58	3
Work-based learning for young people	33	3
Programme centres	21	3
Life Skills	14	3

The following strengths and weaknesses were identified during this inspection:

Strengths

- good progression for Life Skills learners
- very good retention rates for programme centre learners
- good achievement of additional qualifications
- significant amount of good teaching
- very good level of support for learners

Weaknesses

- poor achievement of NVQs at level 1
- poor retention and achievement rates for New Deal foundation clients
- weak progress reviews
- insufficient focus on outcomes for Life Skills and NVQ training programmes

Achievement and standards

133. Progression rates are good for Life Skills learners. In the year 2001-02, 80 per cent progressed to either further education/training or full-time employment. In the current year, of the 42 starts, 69 per cent have achieved positive outcomes. The remaining 23 learners are still on the programme.

134. IN2work has high retention rates for programme centre learners. In the year 2002-03 of the 308 starters, 92 per cent reached the end of their planned learning programme and in the current year, 2003-04, all starters to date, 31, have completed their planned learning programme. Additionally, these learners make satisfactory progress into jobs. In the year 2002-03, 48 per cent of learners gained jobs, while in the current year, 2003-04, 32 per cent of starters have gained jobs with 21 learners still in training.

135. Wall of honour displays in the main training rooms record the success of individual learners in achieving jobs. In one centre, a large banner display is used to congratulate each learner who finds a job. One learner who wanted to work abroad received good support to apply for a job application. He was offered the job, in France, together with accommodation. Learners develop good skills during their training and comment on the increased confidence they gain after starting their programmes.

136. Most learners are encouraged to take part in a range of additional short courses, many leading to accredited certificates. Many Life Skills learners, for example, achieve recognised awards. In the past nine months, a number of learners have achieved certificates: 19 in basic food hygiene, 18 in first aid, 10 in fire safety and 15 in health and safety. New Deal 18-24 learners have a choice of over 50 different courses, up to level 2, and where appropriate, level 3 courses can be arranged. Over 60 per cent of clients from New Deal accessing these short courses gain qualifications.

137. Achievement rates are poor for NVQs at level 1. In the years 2000-01 and 2001-02, only 17 per cent and 18 per cent of learners, respectively, successfully completed their training and achieved their NVQ. Progress is also slow for most learners on NVQ level 1 programmes.

138. For New Deal 18-24 clients, in the year 2001-02 the retention and achievement rates are poor: only 17 per cent and 28 per cent, respectively, gained jobs. This weakness has been recognised by senior managers and the operational manager of the occupational area. There has been a significant improvement in the retention rate in the current year.

The following tables show the achievement and retention rates available up to the time of the inspection.

LSC funded work-based learning																	
NVQ Training	2002-03		2001-02		2000-01		1999-2000										
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
	Number of starts	33		160		118		17									
Retained*	1		37		21		4										
Successfully completed	2		27		20		4										
Still in learning	20		9		3		1										

*retained learners are those who have stayed in learning for at least the planned duration of their training programmes, or have successfully completed their programme within the time allowed

LSC funded work-based learning																
Life Skills																
	2002-03		2001-02		2000-01											
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number of starts	42		93		59											
Retained*	8		27		18	31										
Successfully completed	29		74		3	5										
Still in learning	13		1		0	0										

*retained learners are those who have stayed in learning for at least the planned duration of their training programmes, or have successfully completed their programme within the time allowed

Jobcentre Plus funded programmes																
New Deal 18-24																
	2003-04		2002-03		2001-02											
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number of starts	33		353		139											
Retained*	0		26		24	17										
Planned learning completed	0		18		17	12										
Gained job	0		82		39	28										
Still in training	33		25		0	0										

*retained clients are those who have stayed in learning for at least the planned duration of their programme, or have successfully completed their programme within the time allowed, or who have gained employment during their time on the programme

Jobcentre Plus funded programmes																
Programme Centres																
	2003-04		2002-03													
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number of starts	31		308													
Retained*	0		0	0												
Planned learning completed	31		282	92												
Gained job	10		149	48												
Still in training	21		0	0												

*retained clients are those who have stayed in learning for at least the planned duration of their programme, or have successfully completed their programme within the time allowed, or who have gained employment during their time on the programme

Quality of education and training

139. There is a lot of good teaching throughout all foundation programmes. Of the 11 observed teaching sessions, 73 per cent were graded good or better. Trainers are knowledgeable and enthusiastic about their subject area. Activity-based learning is used well to gain the interest of learners. Training sessions are generally well planned.

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Observed training sessions at the New Deal 18-24 football community training facility, for example, were of a very high standard. Learners were fully engaged in the sessions and demonstrated how their coaching skills are being put into good practice in the community. Observed jobsearch training sessions are well prepared. Observed sessions in other foundation areas are satisfactory. Not all staff, however, use session plans, although all are aware that the session planning will improve the quality of their training. Learners comment on the new skills they acquire during their training.

140. All learners receive very good support. All staff are aware of the barriers to progression experienced by many of the learners. Staff encourage learners to discuss freely any issues concerning them. There are good links with many external agencies and staff are able to refer learners to these agencies to assist with specific problems. Staff also arrange for some agencies to give presentations at the training centres for learners. Staff have good relationships with personal advisers from both Connexions and Jobcentre Plus. Learners are well supported by experienced staff. Trainers show a good understanding of learners' needs and offer a lot of practical support. Staff regularly take learners from all programmes to interviews and off-site training centres in one of the five mini-buses available. More than 40 per cent of learners attending foundation programmes are transported to and from the centre. One very young New Deal client on the environment task force (ETF) option with three young children and a partner to support has been given a lot of guidance and directed skills training. He is being transferred by the team leader to another training company where there is an opportunity for the client to earn more money.

141. Basic skills support is effective for learners. A team of essential skills tutors provide support for literacy, numeracy and IT training. Trainers conduct an additional initial assessment with learners and hold interviews to assist in determining levels of support needs. Trainers keep comprehensive and detailed records of learners' progress. Goals and specific targets are recorded in a learning plan. This plan, however, is a recent development and is not used consistently for all centres.

142. IN2work delivers foundation programmes at all four training centres. Resources are satisfactory overall. Training and administrative staff involved with foundation programmes are generally very experienced in their specific roles. Many members of staff involved in programme centres have good experience of business management and employment issues and offer relevant advice, guidance and support to learners. Basic skills trainers have teaching qualifications and have attended up-to-date core curriculum training. However, many members of teaching staff on foundation programmes do not have current teaching/training qualifications. The quality of accommodation varies among the training centres, but all are satisfactory. In one centre, which has recently opened, the accommodation and resources are excellent. In other centres there is a need, recognised by learners, to redecorate and generally improve the learning environment. All centres have access to a range of teaching aids, including IT, televisions, and video machines. Furniture is of varying quality, but considered satisfactory overall. Learners attend many subcontracted education and commercial training organisations. The resources of some of these subcontractors are very good.

143. Progress reviews are weak. Although a new system for progress reviews has recently been implemented, at the time of inspection this had not had time to take effect. Many learners are unclear about their individual progress and long-term training aims. Many staff members have not yet received clear guidance on how to use the new progress review forms. The progress reviews lack detail and some are not completed for learners. Target-setting is poor. Targets that are set are not always realistic or measurable. Reviews do not adequately record the outcomes of actions identified at the previous review. Learning plans are not comprehensive, not kept up to date and do not record all aspects of learners' experiences while on the programme. Good use made of work experience, but there is insufficient recording of any learning that takes place during these periods.

Leadership and management

144. The leadership and management of foundation programmes are satisfactory. Most staff are well supported by their manager and communication within the centres is good. There are also good opportunities for training to support personal and professional development. Most staff receive regular feedback about their performance from managers both informally and formally. Staff work well as a team across the centres and programmes and are able to share good practice. They are well aware of the issues and barriers faced by learners. Team meetings are used effectively to discuss issues. Since March 2003, eight new members of staff have been recruited to the New Deal foundation team. These staff are beginning to implement new procedures aimed at raising retention and achievement levels.

145. IN2work does not focus sufficiently on outcomes for Life Skills and NVQ training programmes. There are no systems which allow the recording of learners' destinations. IN2work is unable effectively to draw conclusions about the success of its programme in helping learners to progress to mainstream training. IN2work's managers currently use the completion of learning plans as their primary measure of success. Many learners on level 1 NVQ programmes have not achieved their qualification after up to 18 months on programme. There is insufficient recognition that the achievement of NVQs may have a significant effect on the learner's self-esteem and their employment opportunities. The achievement of additional awards is not systematically recorded. The provider is unable, to make quick, accurate judgements about the success rate, or take-up rate of specific awards.

146. Trainers collect feedback from learners, but there is no systematic process for collating and evaluating the results to contribute to continuous improvement. There is not enough consistency in the use of procedures, particularly documents relating to progress reviews and learners' files. However, IN2work has recognised this as an issue and is setting new standards for learners' files.