

INSPECTION REPORT

Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea LEA

25 February 2005



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

Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea LEA

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INSPECTION REPORT

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROVIDER

1. The local education authority's adult and community learning in the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea (RBKC) is the responsibility of the adult learning and skills team, which is located within the community learning and arts division of the education, libraries and arts business group. The borough contracts out its entire adult and community learning provision which is funded through the Central London Learning and Skills Council (LSC). Operating on a commissioning basis, the borough secures service delivery agreements with 17 organisations. The largest of these, which accounts for approximately 75 per cent of the borough's adult and community learning provision, is a local general further education college. The remainder of the RBKC's adult and community learning provision is provided by 16 voluntary sector organisations. They provide courses in information and communications technology (ICT), hospitality, sports, leisure and travel, hairdressing and beauty therapy, health, social and care and public services, visual and performing arts and media, humanities, English, languages and communications and foundation programmes. In 2003-04, there were over 13,000 enrolments on more than 1,000 courses involving 9,300 individual learners. In addition, the borough has a small but developing family learning provision. Schools are invited to apply for funding for this provision and in 2003-04, four primary schools delivered family learning. This inspection covers provision in leisure, sport and recreation, arts, crafts, music, languages and the programme of mixed humanities courses. It was identified that there was insufficient evidence to inspect and grade RBKC's provision in English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) and ICT. This provision and RBKC's other smaller adult and community learning programmes, were inspected under leadership and management.

2. There have been significant staff changes within the borough's community learning and arts division since April 2004. The current director of community learning and arts has been in post since May 2004. Key posts of the head of adult learning and skills, and the adult and community learning manager are currently filled on an interim basis. They are responsible to the director of the division, who reports to the executive director of the business group.

3. The borough is one of contrasts. It is generally regarded as affluent, but has two wards in the north of the borough that are among the most deprived 10 per cent in the country. The age distribution of the population is forecast to change over the next five years, with notable increases in the 55-64 age group.

4. The economic base of the borough is largely business services dominated by retail, hotels, distribution and catering. According to the 2001 census, approximately 21 per cent of the borough's population is from a minority ethnic group, compared with 9.1 per cent nationally.

SCOPE OF PROVISION

Hospitality, sport, leisure & travel

5. Sport and leisure is the second largest area of learning in RBKC's adult and community learning provision. The borough currently offers 26 courses through seven subcontracted providers. Courses include yoga, basketball, keep fit, exercise and fitness and tai chi. Some courses are arranged for specific groups of learners, such as women from community groups and older learners. Just under half of RBKC's courses are run by the local further education college and the remainder are provided at six community organisations across the borough. Most classes are for learners who are new to the sport or discipline, as well as learners with some previous experience. Courses run for 10 weeks and last between one and two hours for each session. They take place at different times of the day and evening during the week in sport halls, community centres and on college premises. One course currently takes place on Saturdays. Most are taught by part-time tutors who teach between three and eight hours a week.

Visual & performing arts & media

6. Just over 70 per cent of RBKC's visual and performing arts provision is in art and crafts. The borough also offers courses in dance, media, music, music technology and performing arts. This inspection includes provision in art, craft and music. The local further education college provides most of the courses in these subjects at its four main sites and at some venues in the community, such as a hospital and a public library. RBKC subcontracts five organisations based in different parts of the borough to provide the rest of its provision in these subjects. Most of these take place on the organisations' premises, but some individual tuition is arranged at learners' homes. Some provision is designed to meet the needs of specific groups of learners, such as older learners and people with mental health illnesses. Most learning sessions last between one and two hours and take place once a week. Most courses run for 10 weeks. The adult and community provision is designed so that learners do not work towards qualifications. Many learners select a course to pursue a personal interest, for further study or for career advancement. Some learners join a course as a first step to further education courses.

Humanities

7. RBKC currently runs 17 humanities courses which cover history, antiques, anthropology, current affairs, mythology, philosophy, and personal development. Eleven of these courses are run by the further education college at all of its four sites. In addition, another subcontracted provider runs six courses in community centres in north Kensington. These are designed for learners over the age of 50 and most combine study of local history with the development of basic word processing and internet research skills. These adult and community learning courses are designed so that they do not lead to qualifications. However, on one course learners are offered the opportunity to work towards a module of a course leading to higher education.

English, languages & communications

8. Of the three providers subcontracted by RBKC to provide courses in modern foreign languages, the local further education college is the largest, with responsibility for just under 75 per cent of provision. They offer courses in French, Spanish, Italian, Arabic, Greek, Swedish, German, Portuguese, Russian, Japanese, Chinese and Polish. One course in Spanish leads to a national qualification. Forty per cent of the courses are in French and Spanish. Many courses are for people with little or no prior learning in their chosen language and some are at a slightly higher level. Several languages are offered at an advanced level. About half the courses take place during the day and last between four and 30 weeks. Learning sessions last between one and two hours. Since September 2004, 1,246 learners have enrolled on 54 language courses. Most of the 27 tutors are employed part time.

ABOUT THE INSPECTION

Number of inspectors	14
Number of inspection days	67
Number of learner interviews	284
Number of staff interviews	123
Number of partner/external agency interviews	5
Number of visits	62

OVERALL JUDGEMENT

9. The quality of the provision is not adequate to meet the reasonable needs of those receiving it. More specifically, leadership and management and the arrangements for equality of opportunity and quality assurance are unsatisfactory. Provision is good in visual and performing arts and media, and satisfactory in English, languages and communications, and in humanities. The quality of the provision in hospitality, sport, leisure and travel is unsatisfactory.

GRADES

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

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

Hospitality, sport, leisure & travel		4
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Leisure, sport and recreation - Adult and community learning	Not available	4
Visual & performing arts & media		2
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Arts - Adult and community learning	Not available	2
Crafts - Adult and community learning	Not available	2
Music - Adult and community learning	Not available	2
Humanities		3
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Other contributory areas - Adult and community learning	Not available	3
English, languages & communications		3
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Languages - Adult and community learning	Not available	3

KEY FINDINGS

Achievement and standards

10. **Learners on visual arts and music programmes develop good practical and creative skills and attain very good standards of work. Many learners on art and craft courses quickly acquire a good range of general and very specific technical skills. Learners develop very good performance skills in music.** They develop good listening skills and use their knowledge in music theory sessions effectively to refine their playing. Learners on singing courses develop the good posture and techniques required to sing with confidence and good tone.

11. **Many learners on humanities courses develop good study skills and work well with each other.** Some learners develop their confidence as the courses progress and make outstanding contributions to discussions. Some learners benefit from the few

opportunities to progress from introductory courses to more demanding ones.

12. Learners on some leisure, sports and recreation courses develop good technical skills and make good progress towards improving their general fitness and well being. However, some learners do not receive sufficient guidance on how to improve their skills and they make little progress.

13. Learners' attainment of language skills is satisfactory. Some learners develop good fluency in speaking and have good pronunciation. Most learners achieve satisfactory skills in grammatical structures and vocabulary.

14. Attendance rates and punctuality are unsatisfactory on many courses, in all areas of learning, especially on arts and humanities programmes. On some courses, attendance rates are frequently between 50 per cent and 66 per cent and fewer than a third of learners regularly attend some sports and fitness courses. This often disrupts learning activities, including discussions and group work. Most tutors do not sufficiently emphasise the importance of good attendance and punctuality. RBKC was unable to provide reliable data on retention rates during the inspection.

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
Hospitality, sport, leisure & travel	0	1	1	4	1	1	0	8
Visual & performing arts & media	1	16	15	6	1	0	0	39
Humanities	0	2	4	3	1	0	0	10
English, languages & communications	1	5	4	10	2	0	0	22
Total	2	24	24	23	5	1	0	79

15. Learners on visual arts and music courses benefit from good teaching. Most tutors have particularly high standards of professional and practical skills and knowledge in their subjects. Learners receive very good individual tuition, useful guidance and constructive feedback to help them develop and extend their skills.

16. Some teaching in humanities and on languages programmes is stimulating and well planned. Humanities tutors are confident, and very knowledgeable in their subjects. They are particularly successful at communicating their enthusiasm about their specialities to learners and most tutors use stimulating and varied learning activities, and a wide range of interesting resources. Tutors who teach languages consult with learners effectively when planning detailed schemes of work and lesson plans. Some tutors are skilled at maximising opportunities for learners to practise language skills through a wide range of stimulating learning activities. However, some humanities tutors do not give learners enough opportunities to learn independently and some language tutors use a narrow range of learning resources. They do not adequately help learners reinforce their knowledge of the language they are studying.

17. Many sports and recreation and craft programmes use very good facilities.

Accommodation used for sports and recreation are well lit and ventilated, have effective heating systems, good floors and are easily accessible. **Learners on many craft courses benefit from an extensive range of specialist equipment** and stimulating learning environments in millinery, glass, jewellery, dressmaking and sculpture.

18. Assessment practices are good on almost all language courses. Tutors use a good range of assessments to identify learners' prior experience and individual learning goals. Most learners receive good feedback on their progress towards group and individual learning goals. Many tutors keep detailed records of learners' progress and each learner's results or achievements.

19. Learners on arts and humanities courses benefit from particularly good individual support. Tutors are very sensitive to learners' individual learning styles and personal circumstances. Tutors who teach singing and some humanities courses help learners who speak English as an additional language understand jargon in texts, increase their fluency and improve their pronunciation. Learners receive satisfactory individual support on languages, and sports and recreation courses. **However, many learners do not receive adequate information before they join some craft and humanities courses.** Some information on RBKC's sports and recreation courses is often out of date and inaccurate. Most learners on these courses are unaware of other adult and community learning courses offered throughout the borough.

20. RBKC provides a good range of visual and performing arts and languages programmes. The good geographical spread of programmes throughout the borough provides a good choice of courses in a wide range of arts subjects and languages in many different locations and at different times of day. RBKC's arts provision is particularly well designed. It attracts new learners and provides imaginative learning opportunities for people over the age of 50. Staff are also successful at encouraging learners who have benefited from attending a class to move to other classes or leave the provision to use the skills they have developed. The content of most languages courses is varied and meet the needs and interests of learners well. Many learners benefit from a well-planned programme of courses that provide good opportunities to progress to courses at a higher level.

21. RBKC's humanities programme provides some good learning opportunities for learners over 50. Although the range of humanities subjects available is narrow, the range of courses within the subjects offered are stimulating and interesting. However, the main target groups for humanities is unclear. RBKC's small sports and recreation programme provides a satisfactory range of sports and fitness activities.

22. Some accommodation in a few learning centres is inadequate. For example, a drawing studio is in poor state of repair and a pottery studio is not big enough for the number of learners. ICT equipment is not available in some premises and is inadequate in others. This prevents learners on humanities, art and language courses, using computers to develop their skills and competence in their chosen subjects. Some of the

rooms used for language courses have poor acoustics, which can make listening to a foreign language unnecessarily difficult. Some rooms are too small for the number of learners attending humanities and sports and recreation classes.

23. Some learning resources are poorly managed on languages, and sports and recreation programmes. Many language tutors do not have adequate expertise in using the full range of resources that are available in many venues. Many tutors have insufficient professional support when selecting what to purchase or how to use a wider range of equipment. Although the facilities used for sports and recreation programmes are good, they are poorly managed at some venues. Some floors are too dirty, and rooms and equipment are not properly prepared before a class is due to start. Some classes which need a quiet and peaceful environment are inappropriately scheduled and are often disrupted by noise or interruptions from other classes. Managers do not systematically carry out adequate risk assessments to check the suitability of accommodation and equipment for sports and leisure classes.

24. Too few tutors use adequate methods for measuring and recording learners' progress on visual and performing arts and humanities programmes. Some providers have developed innovative systems to record learners' progress on arts programmes, such as using digital cameras, well-designed forms or cards. However, many of these systems are not used adequately by all staff. Similarly, few humanities learners have permanent records of their achievements.

25. Some teaching and monitoring of learners' progress is unsatisfactory on sports and recreation programmes. Some learners benefit from good teaching and receive well-structured advice on carrying out their role. **However, many sports and recreation tutors do not adequately demonstrate techniques.** Many learning sessions are inadequately planned and managed. Systems to ensure safe working practices are inadequate. Most tutors do not collect adequate information about learners' existing health conditions for planning learning activities. Some tutors do not correct learners whose techniques are potentially damaging and injurious when carrying out exercises.

Leadership and management

26. Some of the subcontracted providers manage their adult and community learning programmes well. Many providers market their programmes effectively and have satisfactory systems for enrolling learners onto courses. Some tutors develop thorough records of learning, including relevant and well-designed schemes of work and lesson plans. However, some learners do not benefit from these effective management systems, especially learners on sports and recreation programmes. RBKC does not have a sufficient overview of the quality of the planning and management of its adult and community learning programmes.

27. Some providers place a high priority on equal opportunities. They have well-developed equal opportunities policies and complaints procedures, which they implement and review regularly. Some providers make a good contribution to widening participation by recruiting older learners, learners with physical and sensory impairments,

and vulnerable or isolated learners. Many learners with identified additional needs, such as dyslexia, hearing impairments and mental health illness, receive very good support from tutors and support staff.

28. Financial management is satisfactory. RBKC uses funding from the LSC appropriately to secure provision at reasonable cost through subcontracting arrangements. Some subcontracted providers make good use of external funds to enhance the service they provide to learners. However, RBKC does not adequately audit the use of allocated funds.

29. **RBKC provides inadequate strategic direction for its adult and community learning provision.** RBKC's strategy for achieving its mission and strategic goals is unclear. RBKC does not adequately manage its strategies to widen participation in adult and community learning. Subcontracted providers receive insufficient information on the overall strategic aims of the provision and are given inadequate support in planning their programmes.

30. **Management of contracts with subcontracted providers is poor.** The comprehensive service level agreements used for subcontracted providers give some good guidance about performance levels and required standards of provision. However, monitoring of these contracts is weak. Annual recruitment targets are not adequately monitored. RBKC does not have a strategy for developing learners' literacy, numeracy and language skills to help them achieve their learning programmes. The service level agreements with providers do not include guidance on this aspect of their provision.

31. **RBKC makes insufficient use of data to manage and improve its provision.** Managers do not adequately use data collected through effective electronic systems to manage the programmes and evaluate the quality of the provision. RBKC does not have accurate data on the programmes that are running at any one time or how many learners are attending. Similarly, it does not adequately collate and analyse data on retention and attendance rates.

32. **RBKC's adult and community learning division does not adequately promote, monitor or manage equality of opportunity.** Strategies for promoting equality and diversity and increasing the participation of learners from under-represented groups are inadequate. Managers do not adequately monitor providers' compliance with the requirement to promote equality of opportunity. They do not adequately check that providers promote fair and equal access to learning. RBKC does not adequately use the data it collects to monitor and develop its promotion of equal opportunities in a systematic and planned way. Target-setting is weak. The development plan linked to the self-assessment report contains no references to equality of opportunity.

33. **A few providers have a good understanding of quality assurance and implement some effective systems that lead to improvements.** However, RBKC has not carried out monitoring to assess the effectiveness of these schemes or the quality of teaching and learning across the provision.

34. **RBKC's arrangements for quality assurance are unsatisfactory.** RBKC does not

adequately monitor the quality of many aspects of its adult and community learning provision. Although managers have recently started to observe learning sessions, they rely too heavily on subcontractors' own quality assurance arrangements, which are often insufficiently rigorous. RBKC does not adequately use the data collected on learners' views or retention and achievement to evaluate its provision.

35. **The self-assessment process is unsatisfactory.** RBKC does not adequately combine judgements from all providers to self-assess its provision. RBKC's self-assessment report is too descriptive and insufficiently self-critical. Too few area of learning reports contain judgements about all RBKC's adult and community learning provision. However, the development plan for 2005-06 is self-critical and comprehensive. The plan identifies realistic action that relates well to most of the weaknesses from the inspection.

Leadership and management

Strengths

- good management of programmes by most providers
- good promotion of equal opportunities by some providers

Weaknesses

- inadequate strategic direction
- poor management of contracts with providers
- insufficient use of data
- inadequate promotion and monitoring of equal opportunities by RBKC
- unsatisfactory quality assurance arrangements by RBKC
- poor self-assessment

Hospitality, sport, leisure & travel

Leisure, sport and recreation

Strengths

- some good development of personal and technical skills
- some very good sports facilities

Weaknesses

- some poor instructing and teaching
- insufficient monitoring of learners' progress
- inadequate attention to safe working practices
- poor management of some aspects of the courses

Visual & performing arts & media

Arts

Strengths

- very good standard of drawing and painting
- good teaching
- good range of provision throughout the borough
- good support for learners

Weaknesses

- poor punctuality and attendance
- insufficient use of ICT
- insufficient recording of progress and achievement

Crafts

Strengths

- very good attainment of craft skills
- successful individualised and inclusive teaching
- some good specialist facilities
- good range of provision across the borough

Weaknesses

- insufficient pre-course information
- some unsatisfactory accommodation
- insufficient recording of progress and achievement

Music

Strengths

- very good attainment of music skills
- good teaching
- good music resources
- good support for individuals

Weaknesses

- insufficient recording of progress and achievement
- frequent cancellation of some provision

Humanities

Other contributory areas

Strengths

- stimulating teaching and learning on most courses
- good development of learners' study skills
- good support for learners

Weaknesses

- poor attendance on many courses
- some poor accommodation
- inadequate planning and review of humanities provision across the borough

English, languages & communications

Languages

Strengths

- good consideration of learners' needs in course planning
- good assessment practices
- good range of programmes

Weaknesses

- weak management of learning resources
- insufficient sharing of expertise

WHAT LEARNERS LIKE ABOUT ROYAL BOROUGH OF KENSINGTON AND CHELSEA LEA:

- the quality of teaching
- opportunities to try new things and develop new skills
- welcoming, supportive and patient tutors
- courses are focused on our needs and not exam syllabuses
- opportunities to meet new people
- the good range of courses
- learning that challenges the mind

WHAT LEARNERS THINK ROYAL BOROUGH OF KENSINGTON AND CHELSEA LEA COULD IMPROVE:

- the guidance provided beforehand on what is required
- the quality of some accommodation
- the course fees - 'they are too high'
- the access to some classrooms
- the poor access to some classes
- the frequency of classes - 'once a week is not enough'

KEY CHALLENGES FOR ROYAL BOROUGH OF KENSINGTON AND CHELSEA LEA:

- develop and implement a well-researched strategic direction for adult and community learning throughout the borough
- support and monitor the management of programmes through robust contractual arrangements with subcontracted providers
- improve the collection and use of data to manage and evaluate provision
- develop systems and resources to promote and monitor equal opportunities to all learners and staff
- build on recently developed practices to monitor and improve the quality of provision
- co-ordinate more effective self-assessment of the borough's adult and community learning provision
- identify and share good practice and expertise

Language of the Adult and Community Learning Sector

Terminology varies across the range of education and training settings covered by the *Common Inspection Framework*. The table below indicates the terms appropriate to Adult and Community Learning

Single term used in the framework	Relating the term to Adult and Community Learning	
Provider	Provider	Any organisation providing opportunities for adults to meet personal or collective goals through the experience of learning. Providers include local authorities, specialist designated institutions, voluntary and community sector organisations, regeneration partnerships and further education colleges
Learner	Learner	Includes those learning by participating in community projects, as well as those on courses. Learning, however, will be planned, with intended outcomes.
Teacher / trainer	Tutor	Person teaching adult learners or guiding or facilitating their learning.
	Mentor	Person providing individual, additional support, guidance and advice to learners to help them achieve their learning goals.
Learning goals	Main learning goals	Intended gains in skills, knowledge or understanding. Gains may be reflected in the achievement of nationally recognised qualifications. Or they may be reflected in the ability of learners to apply learning in contexts outside the learning situation, e.g. in the family, community, or workplace. Learners' main goal/s should be recorded on an individual or, in some cases, group learning plan. Plans should be revised as progress is made and new goals emerge.
	Secondary learning goals	These may include planned-for gains in self-confidence, and inter-personal skills. These should also be included in learning plans where appropriate.
Personal and learning skills	Personal and learning skills	These include being able to study independently, willingness to collaborate with others, and readiness to take up another opportunity for education or training.

Other terms used in Adult and Community Learning

	Relating the term to Adult and Community Learning
Unanticipated, or unintended learning outcome	Adults often experience unanticipated gains as a result of being involved in learning. These include improved self-esteem, greater self-confidence and a growing sense of belonging to a community. Gains of this kind should be acknowledged and recorded in any record of achievement.
Subject-based programme	A programme organised around a body of knowledge, e.g. the structure and usage of the French language or ceramic glazing techniques. Students could be expected to progress from one aspect of the subject to another, to grasp increasingly complex concepts or analyses or to develop greater levels of skill or to apply skills to a new area of work.
Issue-based programme	A programme that is based on the concerns, interests and aspirations of particular groups, for example members of a Sikh Gurdwara wanting to address inter-faith relations in their town, or parents worried about the incidence of drug abuse in their locality. Issue-based learning tends to be associated with geographically defined communities, but the increasing use of electronic means of communication means that this need no longer be the case. Progress is defined in terms of the group's increasing ability to analyse its situation, to access new information and skills which will help it resolve its difficulties and generate solutions and its growing confidence in dealing with others to implement those solutions.
Outreach provision	Provision established in a community setting in addition to provision made at an organisation's main site(s). Outreach programmes may be similar to courses at the main site(s) or be designed to meet the specific requirements of that community.
Neighbourhood-based work	The provider's staff have a long-term presence in a local community with a specific remit to understand the concerns of the local residents and develop learning activities to meet local needs and interests.
Community regeneration	The process of improving the quality of life in communities by investing in their infrastructure and facilities, creating opportunities for training and employment and tackling poor health and educational under-achievement. Community regeneration requires the active participation of local residents in decision-making. Changes and improvements are often achieved either directly or indirectly as a result of the adult learning activities which arise from this.

Relating the term to Adult and Community Learning	
Community capacity building	The process of enabling local people to develop the knowledge, skills and confidence to take advantage of opportunities for employment, training and further education and to become selfmanaging, sustainable communities.
Active citizenship	The process whereby people recognise the power they have to improve the quality of life for others and make a conscious effort to do so: the process whereby people recognise the power of organisations and institutions to act in the interests of the common good and exercise their influence to ensure that they do so. Adult learning contributes to active citizenship.

DETAILED INSPECTION FINDINGS

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Grade 4

Strengths

- good management of programmes by most providers
- good promotion of equal opportunities by some providers

Weaknesses

- inadequate strategic direction
- poor management of contracts with providers
- insufficient use of data
- inadequate promotion and monitoring of equal opportunities by RBKC
- unsatisfactory quality assurance arrangements by RBKC
- poor self-assessment

36. Some of the subcontracted providers manage their adult and community learning programmes well. Many providers market their programmes effectively and have satisfactory systems for enrolling learners onto courses. Some providers effectively monitor staff's qualifications and either provide appropriate staff development or give them advice on how they can receive additional training. Some tutors develop thorough records of planned learning, that include relevant and well-designed schemes of work and lesson plans. Some providers work well with tutors to develop good systems for identifying and recording learners' individual learning goals and their progress towards achieving their targets. However, some learners do not benefit from these effective management systems, especially learners on sports and recreation programmes. Systems to manage these programmes and ensure safe working practices are inadequate. RBKC does not have a sufficient overview of the quality of the planning and management of its adult and community learning programmes and does not adequately help subcontracted providers share good practice.

37. RBKC's arrangements for staff development and performance review for employees involved in managing the borough's adult and community learning provision is satisfactory. All new staff receive appropriate information about the borough council's work and a satisfactory job-specific induction within three months of taking up employment. RBKC provides a satisfactory range of training courses for its staff. Some staff who work for the subcontracted providers take part in training which is specially designed for them by the borough and the local further education college.

38. Financial management is satisfactory. RBKC uses funding received from the LSC appropriately to secure provision at reasonable cost through subcontracting arrangements with a further education college and 16 community organisations. Some subcontracted providers make good use of external funds to enhance the service they

provide to learners. However, RBKC does not adequately monitor the way all providers use the allocated funds.

39. RBKC provides inadequate strategic direction for its adult and community learning provision. The borough's mission statement is disseminated in recent publications and its strategic goals are stated in the self-assessment report. However, RBKC's strategy for achieving these goals is unclear. The strategic and development plans for adult learning are too vague and do not sufficiently identify what the borough hopes to achieve each year. RBKC does not adequately manage its strategies to widen participation in adult and community learning. Although the borough routinely carries out research on the local social and economic environment, managers do not adequately use this information to identify priority target groups for its provision. Subcontracted providers receive insufficient information on the strategic aims for the borough's adult and community learning provision and are given inadequate support in planning their programmes to achieve these aims. The provision primarily consists of similar programmes each year. It is not adequately based on strategies to attract new learners or meet needs identified through research or consultation with local communities. RBKC does not adequately facilitate discussions between providers to help ensure that they share expertise and collaborate effectively to develop and implement plans for a cohesive programme of courses in each area of learning.

40. Management of contracts with subcontracted providers is poor. The service level agreements used for subcontracted providers are comprehensive and give some good guidance about performance levels and required standards of provision. However, monitoring of these contracts is weak. Most service level agreements provide little information on how the programmes are financed, and some providers do not know what courses they are financed to deliver, at what rates. Some contracts contain inaccurate or out-of-date information on agreed provision. Providers do not have sufficient opportunities to consult with RBKC on the programme of courses to be offered each year. They do not receive clear guidelines about what they should do when courses fail to recruit. Annual recruitment targets are not adequately monitored. Recruitment targets stated in some current agreements are unrealistic, but have not been reviewed or revised. RBKC does not have a strategy for developing learners' literacy, numeracy and language skills to help them achieve their learning programmes. The service level agreements with providers do not include guidance on this aspect of their provision.

41. RBKC makes insufficient use of data to manage and improve its provision. The borough uses effective electronic systems to collect data from its subcontracted providers each month. Staff from RBKC's information and research department produce a full analysis of the data termly, which is distributed to all providers. However, the data is not adequately used by managers to manage the programmes and evaluate the quality of the provision. RBKC does not have accurate data on the programmes that are running at any one time or how many learners are attending. Similarly, it does not adequately collate and analyse data on retention and attendance rates. The range of terms used in forms to evaluate providers' performance is confusing. For example, in some documents, the word attendance is variously described as participation, attendance, enrolment or

retention, with insufficient guidance available to providers or managers on how they should use each term. RBKC does not have an adequate system to monitor attendance across providers other than through termly, retrospective reports.

Equality of opportunity

Contributory grade 4

42. Some providers give a high priority to the promotion of equal opportunities. They have well-developed equal opportunities policies and complaints procedures, which they implement and review regularly. Good publicity materials promote equality of opportunity effectively and indicate a positive approach to supporting people from the diverse groups within the community. Some providers' action plans show how they constantly strive to improve their approaches to equality and diversity. Some providers make a good contribution to widening participation by recruiting older learners, learners with physical and sensory impairments, and vulnerable or isolated learners. Many learners with identified additional needs, such as dyslexia, hearing impairments and mental health illness, receive very good support from tutors and additional support staff. For example, some learners who attend the local further education college for adult and community learning benefit from a wide range of support, such as additional learning assistance and a counselling service.

43. RBKC has satisfactory arrangements for checking providers' procedures for promoting equal opportunities before agreeing to contract with them. When applying to RBKC for funding to provide adult and community learning programmes, providers are required to give detailed information about their organisation's promotion of equality of opportunity. Although RBKC carefully considers responses before awarding funding, this process is not sufficiently rigorous. Few providers have premises that have good access for people with restricted mobility. However, some are seeking ways of removing the barriers to access with support from RBKC.

44. RBKC's adult and community learning division does not adequately promote, monitor or manage equality of opportunity. Some very relevant documents developed by RBKC, such as a policy and procedure for protecting vulnerable adults from abuse, a race equality scheme and a corporate equality plan for all service users, are not sufficiently promoted or used to protect learners. RBKC has inadequate strategies for promoting equality of opportunity and diversity, and increasing the participation of learners from under-represented groups. Managers do not adequately monitor providers' compliance with the requirement to promote equality of opportunity included in RBKC's service level agreements. For example, RBKC's managers do not adequately check that providers promote fair and equal access to learning. Similarly, RBKC does not adequately review providers' equal opportunities policies and procedures to ensure they comply with legislation and to assess the extent to which they protect learners. All providers receive RBKC's document entitled 'promoting equality and respecting diversity', but managers do not adequately assess its impact on the adult and community learning provision. Although RBKC's promotion of racial awareness is satisfactory, managers do not set targets for recruiting minority ethnic groups, learners with disabilities and men. Similarly, managers do not check teaching and learning resources for age, gender and race stereotyping. RBKC does not adequately use the data it collects on

learners' ages, ethnic origins, postcodes and gender, to monitor and develop its promotion of equal opportunities in a systematic and planned way. The self-assessment report on equal opportunities does not accurately identify the strengths and weaknesses. It is also too descriptive and insufficiently analytical. The development plan contains no references to equality of opportunity.

Quality assurance

Contributory grade 4

45. A few providers have a good understanding of quality assurance and implement some effective systems that lead to improvements. For example, a few providers have satisfactory systems for using learners' and tutors' views for evaluating their adult and community learning programmes. Some providers effectively monitor records of the learning process, such as schemes of work, lesson plans and records of learners' progress. RBKC has recently benefited from working with one of its providers and some external partners to help subcontractors build capacity to assure the quality of their provision. For example, this partnership has led to training in setting up and implementing schemes to observe learning sessions. However, RBKC does not adequately evaluate the effectiveness of these schemes or the quality of teaching and learning across the provision. Its service level agreements with subcontractors identify appropriate measures for monitoring compliance, quality assurance arrangements and developing its staff. However, providers do not receive sufficient information on how they are expected to quality assure their provision or how quality assurance arrangements will be monitored. Some subcontracted providers do not have well-developed arrangements for quality assurance. However, a few providers have recently started to share good practice and expertise.

46. RBKC's arrangements for quality assurance are unsatisfactory. Responsibilities for quality assurance and self-assessment are not clear. RBKC does not have a specific quality assurance framework for adult and community learning and does not adequately monitor the quality of its provision. Although managers have recently started to observe learning sessions, they rely too heavily on subcontractors' own quality assurance arrangements, which are often insufficiently rigorous. Managers do not have an adequate evaluation of the standard of its provision or an accurate view on how well adult and community education meets the borough's strategic goals. RBKC has collected a sample of learners' views on the quality of their programmes, but managers do not adequately analyse this information or monitor any subsequent actions to check whether improvements have been made. Similarly, managers do not adequately collect or use data on retention and attendance rates to evaluate the provision.

47. The self-assessment process is unsatisfactory. RBKC consults with its subcontracted providers when compiling the self-assessment report, but it does not adequately combine judgements from all providers to self-assess its provision. RBKC's self-assessment report is too descriptive and insufficiently self-critical. Most of the grades are too high. The grade given for humanities matched that of the provider. Too few area of learning reports contain judgements about all the borough's adult and community learning provision. Organisations which are responsible for providing programmes in each area of learning do not receive sufficient guidance and support to help the borough produce an accurate

self-assessment report and cohesive development plan for that area of learning. However, the development plan for 2005-06 is self-critical and comprehensive. The plan identifies realistic action that relates well to most of the weaknesses identified at the inspection.

AREAS OF LEARNING

Hospitality, sport, leisure & travel

Hospitality, sport, leisure & travel		4
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Leisure, sport and recreation - Adult and community learning	Not available	4

Leisure, sport and recreation

Strengths

- some good development of personal and technical skills
- some very good sports facilities

Weaknesses

- some poor instructing and teaching
- insufficient monitoring of learners' progress
- inadequate attention to safe working practices
- poor management of some aspects of the courses

Achievement and standards

48. Many learners develop good technical skills and make good progress towards improving their general fitness and well being. For example, many learners identify benefits from attending courses that include improved suppleness, having better mobility and being less stressed. They gain a better understanding of their own health and fitness. Some learners develop the skills required to perform movements and techniques in yoga, tai chi, capoeira and basketball to a good standard. On some courses, learners develop effective co-operative and teamworking skills. However, some learners do not receive sufficient guidance on how to improve their skills and they make little progress. Although the attendance rates for a few courses are good, fewer than a third of learners regularly attend some courses. RBKC does not keep reliable data on retention rates on all sports classes.

Quality of education and training

49. Many learners benefit from taking part in sports and fitness programmes with very good facilities. Accommodation is well lit and ventilated, with effective heating systems and easily accessible. Floors used for exercises are good. Some premises have sprung floors which provide particularly good support and protection. Learners appreciate the welcoming surroundings and comfortable and warm changing rooms. They often make

good use of other facilities at the venues, such as a café or meeting areas. Similarly, learners benefit from using good equipment at most venues, although there is a shortage of small exercise equipment on a few courses with large numbers of learners. Too few tutors offer handouts to support learning or encourage learners to develop routines which they can practise at home.

50. RBKC provides a satisfactory range of provision. The small programme covers a satisfactory choice of sports and fitness activities. However, there are significantly more classes in the south of the borough and very few courses on Saturdays or during college or school holidays.

51. Learners receive satisfactory support. Tutors provide learners with appropriate personal support and check that they can understand written forms or handouts. Some providers produce well-designed brochures, and have extensive displays on their premises of information on local courses and the support available to learners. Most pre-course information sheets provide learners with adequate, basic information. However, some information provided by RBKC is often out of date and inaccurate. Most learners are unaware of other adult and community learning courses offered throughout the borough.

52. Some learners benefit from good teaching with tutors demonstrating movements and techniques effectively. Clear instructions and explanations give learners a good understanding of what they need to do to develop their skills and fitness. Learners on these courses receive well-structured advice on carrying out techniques and constructive feedback on their progress. They develop a good understanding of the reasons for, and benefits of, particular practices. However, many tutors do not adequately demonstrate the techniques they are teaching. Learners often only see tutors carrying out a movement from one viewpoint, when they are facing them, and frequently struggle to copy the movement accurately. Many tutors often rush explanations of movements and exercises or use too much jargon. Many learners do not receive sufficient individual help in carrying out the tutors' instructions. Some tutors do not adequately correct learners' techniques or position during a movement. Similarly, many tutors do not adequately emphasise or review key learning points. Many learning sessions are inadequately planned and managed. A few tutors prepare detailed lesson plans and schemes of work but many tutors do not prepare adequate records of planned learning. Most tutors do not adequately check whether planned learning sessions are appropriate for learners who have different prior experience and different reasons for joining a course. Most tutors do not systematically check whether learners have recently suffered from illness or injury before starting the lesson.

53. Learners receive insufficient feedback on their progress. Tutors do not adequately identify learners' prior experience or what they hope to gain from attending the course. Records of learners' aims are too vague and some tutors do not record this information at all. Similarly, tutors do not keep adequate records of learners' progress. Most learners receive little or no constructive feedback on the quality of their work or their overall progress.

Leadership and management

54. RBKC's sport and leisure provision provides some good opportunities for learners from specific community groups. For example, a few classes are arranged specifically for older learners or for women only. Although access to many venues is good, one venue has very inappropriate access for learners with restricted mobility.

55. Many aspects of the programmes are inadequately managed. Although the facilities are good, they are poorly managed at some venues. Some floors are too dirty, and rooms and equipment are not properly prepared before a class is due to start. Some classes, such as meditation and yoga, require a quiet and peaceful environment, but are inappropriately scheduled and are often disrupted by noise or interruptions from other classes. The capacity of the accommodation for each class is not routinely checked. Some rooms would be too small if all learners on the register attended the same session. Most of the providers do not systematically gather or use feedback from learners when planning their programme of adult and community courses. Tutors are not encouraged or supported to attend professional development to extend or update their skills. Attendance and punctuality at some classes are poor. This is not sufficiently monitored and tutors do not sufficiently reinforce the importance of good attendance and punctuality.

56. Systems to ensure safe working practices are inadequate and many staff do not fully recognise their importance. Managers do not systematically carry out adequate risk assessments to check the suitability of accommodation and equipment in sports and leisure classes. Many tutors are not aware of emergency procedures for the premises they are using. In some venues, none of the staff have responsibility for first aid during evening classes. Most tutors do not collect adequate information about learners' existing health conditions to use when planning learning activities. Some tutors do not correct learners whose techniques are potentially damaging and injurious.

57. Although some providers routinely monitor the quality of teaching, observations of learning sessions are often not carried out by a sports and leisure specialist. Records of these observations are often inadequate and the process is not adequately used to help tutors to improve their practice and the quality of service to learners. The self-assessment report does not adequately reflect the provision of all seven providers.

Visual & performing arts & media

Visual & performing arts & media		2
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Arts - Adult and community learning	Not available	2
Crafts - Adult and community learning	Not available	2
Music - Adult and community learning	Not available	2

Arts*Strengths*

- very good standard of drawing and painting
- good teaching
- good range of provision throughout the borough
- good support for learners

Weaknesses

- poor punctuality and attendance
- insufficient use of ICT
- insufficient recording of progress and achievement

Crafts*Strengths*

- very good attainment of craft skills
- successful individualised and inclusive teaching
- some good specialist facilities
- good range of provision across the borough

Weaknesses

- insufficient pre-course information
- some unsatisfactory accommodation
- insufficient recording of progress and achievement

Music

Strengths

- very good attainment of music skills
- good teaching
- good music resources
- good support for individuals

Weaknesses

- insufficient recording of progress and achievement
- frequent cancellation of some provision

Achievement and standards

58. Learners on visual arts and music programmes develop good practical and creative skills and attain very good standards of work. Many learners on art and craft courses quickly gain a good range of general and very specific technical skills. Learners on art courses achieve very good standards of drawing and painting, and develop a good range of technical and creative skills. They benefit from working with artists who use a wide range of interesting techniques and approaches. Learners develop particularly good standards on specialist craft courses. For example, learners on courses in using glass develop good technical skills and use a good variety of forming and decorating techniques to produce very sophisticated articles. Learners develop very good performance skills in music. Learners on singing courses develop the good posture and techniques required to sing with confidence and good tone in groups and individually. Learners develop good listening skills and use their knowledge in music theory effectively to refine their playing to achieve a good standard of performance. Learners on music appreciation courses develop a good understanding of music history and participate well in discussions on different musical styles.

59. Punctuality and attendance are poor in many classes. Attendance rates are particularly poor on some art classes where they are between 50 and 67 per cent. RBKC did not provide accurate data on retention rates for all of its provision in this area of learning during the inspection.

Quality of education and training

60. Learners who attend visual arts and music courses benefit from good teaching. Most tutors have particularly high standards of professional and practical skills and knowledge in their subjects. On art courses, tutors use a very good range of teaching methods to communicate their chosen subject, such as how to create work in a specific style using a mixture of collage and paint. Many learners who have not previously attended arts classes are often enthusiastic about working in a new medium or tackling a new technique. Tutors focus particularly well on identifying learning activities for individual learners when planning learning sessions on craft courses. Learners work effectively on

personal projects and receive very good individual tuition, guidance and feedback to help them develop and extend their skills. Tutors use a wide variety of approaches to ensure that all learners are kept motivated and achieve to their potential. The standard of teaching in music is very good. Tutors make good use of practical demonstrations and give precise instruction and accurate advice on how to achieve particular aspects of performance. Learners benefit from well-structured learning sessions and are encouraged to try out new ideas and approaches. Tutors use a good range of learning activities and are skilled at ensuring that all learners are involved. Tutors are particularly skilled at checking that learners understand the theory behind the practical skills before the next learning session.

61. RBKC provides a good range of visual and performing arts programmes. The good geographical spread of programmes throughout the borough provides a good choice of courses in a wide range of arts subjects in many different locations and at different times of day. Many courses take place in learning centres near public transport routes and in the middle of residential areas during the day, in the evening and at weekends. The breadth of provision provides good opportunities for learners to progress to art and craft programmes at higher levels. Learners who join vocal or instrumental courses with little or no prior experience make good use of the opportunities to progress to intermediate courses. RBKC's provision is particularly successful at attracting learners who are new to adult and community learning onto visual and performing arts programmes. Similarly, the subcontracted providers' staff are also successful at encouraging learners who have benefited from attending a class to move to other classes or to use the skills they have developed at work, home or in their communities. Some of the provision is particularly imaginative and provides good learning opportunities for older learners in their homes or in community centres. For example, a singing course at a centre for learners over the age of 50 introduces learners to new music and also provides them with the opportunity to sing classic songs from their own era. The group performs on tours to hospitals, nursing homes and sheltered housing.

62. Learners on art courses benefit from particularly good individual support. For example, tutors have a good understanding of the impact of learners' personal or medical circumstances and adapt learning activities appropriately. Music tutors are very sensitive to learners' individual learning styles and use clear language. Singing tutors effectively help learners who speak English as an additional language to achieve the correct pronunciation of lyrics. Many tutors use good mechanisms to support learners who have missed sessions, such as providing CDs on which their own performance and composition is recorded, to enable them to rehearse outside class. Most learners receive good advice on other visual and performing arts courses, as well as interesting and helpful information about the industry. Many learners receive accurate information about their entitlement to financial support. However, many learners on craft courses do not receive adequate information about a course before they arrive at the first session. For example, learners are not made sufficiently aware of the type of materials or items they need to bring for the first session or that they may incur additional costs for materials during the course.

63. Some specialist craft facilities are particularly good. For example, a millinery

workshop at one centre has an extensive range of specialist equipment and offers a very wide range of approaches to hat making. Glass and jewellery workshops at one site provides learners with good resources. Many learners benefit from working in a well-equipped dressmaking workshop, and a stimulating and creative environment in a sculpture studio. Most accommodation and learning resources used for art and music courses are satisfactory. In the band workshop, learners have access to a very good range of electronic instruments, percussion and microphones. However, accommodation in a few learning centres is inadequate. For example, a drawing studio is in poor state of repair and a pottery studio is not big enough for the number of learners. Many learners are disadvantaged by insufficient use of ICT in art classes. ICT equipment is not available at some venues. Learners are unable to develop their skills in using computers in practical learning sessions.

64. Most learners benefit from effective guidance on how to develop their work and extend their learning. However, too few tutors have developed adequate methods for measuring and recording learners' progress. Some providers have developed innovative systems, such as using digital cameras and well-designed forms or cards, to record learners' progress. However, many of these systems are not used adequately by all staff. Many tutors do not adequately identify or record learners' skills when they join a class or provide learners with sufficient records of their achievements. Many learners cannot easily gauge their overall progress.

Leadership and management

65. Some learning programmes are well managed. Tutors on these programmes use agreed systems effectively to compile comprehensive course files that include documents such as profiles of learners and records of learners' prior experience. Tutors use this information well to plan relevant learning programmes. Most providers meet most of the requirements in their service level agreement. However, most providers do not adequately monitor attendance rates or reinforce with learners the importance of good attendance and punctuality. Most tutors systematically reinforce safe working practices during learning sessions. However, this is not routinely monitored, especially on some ceramic courses, where risk assessments do not identify potential hazards. Too many music learning sessions and courses are cancelled. Learners do not always receive sufficient notice of this or the reasons for the cancellations. Learning is severely disrupted for some learners on these courses.

66. Some providers promote equal opportunities and racial awareness effectively. Some tutors use a good range of multi-cultural learning materials and help learners explore a wide range of subjects, such as non-western art and culturally diverse musical genres. However, access to some accommodation is very difficult for learners with restricted mobility. Some providers are able to move classes to ground-floor accommodation, but do not adequately promote this to potential learners. This is not adequately monitored by RBKC.

67. Some providers have effective quality assurance arrangements that include good evaluation of courses, such as constructive course reviews by learners and tutors.

However, some providers do not have an established programme of observations of learning sessions and do not adequately monitor the quality of teaching and learning. The self-assessment report did not adequately reflect all of RBKC's visual and performing arts provision, although the grades given matched those in the report.

Humanities

Humanities		3
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Other contributory areas - Adult and community learning	Not available	3

Other contributory areas*Strengths*

- stimulating teaching and learning on most courses
- good development of learners' study skills
- good support for learners

Weaknesses

- poor attendance on many courses
- some poor accommodation
- inadequate planning and review of humanities provision across the borough

Achievement and standards

68. Many of the learners on humanities courses are very articulate and well informed. For example, in a current affairs class, many learners have developed the skills required to make astute analysis of issues such as anti-terrorist legislation and changes in American attitudes to Europe. Some learners develop their confidence as the courses progress and make outstanding contributions to discussions. Learners develop good study skills and work well with each other. Many learners develop good skills in reading complex articles and give clear and concise verbal reports that effectively summarise the main points in the article. Learners on most courses use lists of recommended books well and significantly increase their knowledge and awareness of the subject they are studying. For example, on a course on mythology, folklore and witchcraft, learners were able to recommend particular books on the list to other members of the class and provide illustrative explanations on why they were worthwhile. Some learners benefit from the few opportunities to progress from introductory courses, in subjects such as philosophy and culture and social anthropology, to more demanding ones.

69. According to data prepared by the two organisations providing humanities courses, retention rates are good. Between 2001 and 2004, almost 90 per cent of learners completed their courses. However, attendance is poor, with often fewer than two-thirds of learners attending. This often disrupts learning activities planned to include discussions and group work.

Quality of education and training

70. Most learners benefit from good teaching. Tutors are confident, and very knowledgeable in their subjects. Many tutors are particularly successful at communicating their enthusiasm about their specialities to learners. Most learners benefit from stimulating and varied learning activities, with good use of interesting resources. For example, in a local history class for learners over the age of 50, the tutor and the learners contributed to a collection of photographs of local schools in the period between the two world wars. Some tutors arrange for guest speakers or the use of learning resources on loan from external organisations. For example, members of a current affairs class gain considerable benefit from regular guest speakers, who include well-known politicians and political commentators. In a class on English antiques between 1800 and 1930, learners were shown fascinating slides of items of domestic laundry equipment. Learners have diverse cultural and social backgrounds and make good use of the extensive opportunities to share their experiences and learn from each other. However, some tutors do not give learners enough opportunities to learn independently. Some tutors are too inclined to lecture for substantial parts of some learning sessions, and deny learners the opportunity to share and discuss their ideas.

71. Tutors provide learners with good additional support. Most tutors quickly gain a good understanding of learners' prior experience and backgrounds and give effective extra support to learners who lack confidence or fluency in English. For example, learners who speak English as an additional language benefit from additional explanations and handouts. Similarly, tutors work well with learners who are new to studying humanities to help them understand and develop the approaches used for research and studying. However, the leaflets and prospectuses provide learners with inadequate information on the humanities programmes to help them select an appropriate course or to understand the purpose of each course.

72. Learners receive satisfactory feedback on their progress. Tutors who set written assignments mark learners' work promptly and give constructive feedback. Some tutors keep good records of learners' progress and contributions to learning sessions and discuss their comments with learners. However, some tutors keep perfunctory records and do not adequately record their assessments of learners' progress and achievements or share this information with learners.

73. RBKC's humanities programme provides some good learning opportunities for learners over 50. Although the range of humanities subjects is narrow, the range of courses within the subjects offered are stimulating and interesting. However, the intended target groups for the borough's adult and community learning humanities is unclear. Learners on the current programmes represent a narrow age group and do not adequately reflect the ethnic profile of people who live and work in the borough.

74. The accommodation at some learning centres is inadequate. Some rooms are too small for the number of learners and some learning environments are not conducive to learning. Some accommodation is not easily accessible for learners with restricted mobility. Although learners benefit from a good range of resources, they are given too

few opportunities to use ICT to increase their ability to research and write about their chosen subjects.

Leadership and management

75. Some individual learning programmes are well managed, with well-planned courses and good records of learners' aims and their achievements. However, RBKC's adult and community learning humanities provision is inadequately planned and reviewed. Many courses have been offered for some years and their role in providing for current needs has not been questioned, although some now recruit very few learners. The purpose of the provision and aims of some courses are unclear. For example, some tutors and learners are uncertain about the level of courses offered or which skills and benefits learners will obtain from them. Some learners enrol with the intention of attending only certain topics within a course and are not told whether this is acceptable or whether they should inform the tutors when they intend to attend. RBKC and the subcontracted providers' staff do not adequately use management data, individual course reviews, and the responses to surveys of learners' views to determine whether the existing provision matches the needs of the community.

76. Some tutors promote racial and cultural diversity well. Most tutors make effective use of learners' culturally diverse backgrounds to provide a breadth of perspectives when discussing specific topics. However, this is primarily the work of individual tutors and is not agreed practice that is promoted and monitored throughout the borough.

77. The number of visits by providers and RBKC's staff to monitor the quality of teaching has recently increased. However, some of the records of observed learning sessions are bland and do not provide tutors with sufficient guidance on how to improve. Most of the strengths and weaknesses in the self-assessment report matched those given by inspectors, although the report does not include judgements on all RBKC's humanities provision.

English, languages & communications

English, languages & communications		3
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Languages - Adult and community learning	Not available	3

Languages*Strengths*

- good consideration of learners' needs in course planning
- good assessment practices
- good range of programmes

Weaknesses

- weak management of learning resources
- insufficient sharing of expertise

Achievement and standards

78. Learners' attainment of language skills is satisfactory. Some learners develop a good level of fluency in speaking and have good pronunciation. Most learners achieve satisfactory skills in using grammatical structures and vocabulary. However, some learners make little progress, especially in classes where tutors rely on paper-based learning resources such as course books and worksheets. Attendance rates are satisfactory but some learners' progress is hampered by frequent absences and poor punctuality. RBKC is unable to provide reliable data on retention rates.

Quality of education and training

79. Learning programmes are well planned. Tutors make particularly good use of information on learners' prior experience in language learning, as well as their reasons for joining a programme. Many tutors consult with learners effectively when planning detailed schemes of work and lesson plans to ensure that learners meet their individual aims and learning goals. Tutors plan a wide range of learning activities in most learning sessions that suit learners' different methods of learning a language. Some learners benefit from particularly good teaching. Some tutors are skilled at maximising opportunities for learners to practise speaking and listening skills through a wide range of stimulating learning activities. Many learning sessions are well planned and involve a good range of group and individual work to maintain learners' interest and enthusiasm to learn. However, some tutors do not sufficiently reinforce or consolidate learning of the newly presented language. Although some tutors make good use of pictures, games and visual prompts to stimulate conversation and help explain vocabulary, some tutors rely

too much on course books and worksheets.

80. Assessment practices are good on almost all courses. Tutors use a good variety of initial assessments to identify learners' individual learning goals and complete individual learning plans. For example, a tutor effectively assesses new learners' knowledge of the Greek alphabet and a few common words to help plan appropriate learning activities for all learners on the course. Some learners assess their own prior skills and knowledge effectively when they join a course, using well-designed questionnaires and assessments. Most learners receive good feedback on their progress during learning sessions and are aware of their progress towards group and individual learning goals. Many tutors keep detailed records of learners' progress and each learner's results or achievements after assessments or learning activities. Many learners benefit from appropriate additional assignments to complete at home. Tutors mark written work promptly and give learners constructive and helpful feedback. Many learners appreciate this individual monitoring of their skills.

81. RBKC offers a good range of language programmes in a wide variety of languages at different levels. The content of most courses is varied and meet the needs and interests of learners well. For example, many courses include activities such as discussions on literature and debates on current affairs that broaden learners' awareness of the cultures linked to the language they are learning. Many learners benefit from a well-planned programme of courses that provide good opportunities to progress to higher levels. Most learners appreciate that they do not need to work towards a national qualification and that courses are designed to help them achieve their individual learning goals at a more relaxed pace. Similarly, some learners appreciate the opportunities to progress to further education courses involving external examinations. The overall purpose of many of the courses are very clear and provide learners with a good choice. For example, some courses are particularly for learners over the age of 50 and some courses are specifically to help learners maintain and develop language skills, often acquired long ago. Some courses offered as short 'tasters' during the summer term, successfully stimulate learners' interest in the main programme which starts the following autumn. They also provide timely learning opportunities for learners who are keen to learn a language in preparation for a holiday.

82. Learners receive satisfactory support to achieve their learning aims. Some learners with specific additional needs, such as for dyslexia or for a hearing impairment, benefit from a good selection of learning resources and appropriately adapted teaching methods. However, some learners are unaware of the support they can receive. The information learners receive before they start a programme is satisfactory.

83. Many tutors use a narrow range of learning resources. This aspect of the languages provision is inadequately managed. Most tutors do not make sufficient use of technology, such as computers and multimedia equipment, to stimulate learners and extend the range of learning activities they use. Many tutors do not have adequate expertise in using an appropriate range of resources. Some computers are outdated or poorly maintained and cannot be used easily. Some learners are significantly disadvantaged as they can only use CDs that tutors provide, or ones they purchase with

their course books, if they have access to a computer at home, at work or in their communities. Similarly, some learners are not given sufficient guidance on how to benefit from using the CDs. Although many tutors make satisfactory use of audio materials, paper-based visual aids and real objects to stimulate language practice, many tutors provide their own learning materials, particularly those who teach less-common languages. Many tutors are not sufficiently aware of the full range of learning materials that are available and receive insufficient professional support in selecting what to purchase. Most of the rooms used for language courses are a suitable environment for learning. However, some rooms have poor acoustics, which can make listening to a foreign language unnecessarily difficult.

Leadership and management

84. Many aspects of the languages programmes are well managed. Managers and tutors develop appropriate programmes that are well designed and successfully promoted to target groups. However, the providers do not adequately work in partnership with RBKC to achieve this. Staff from the three organisations providing the borough's adult and community learning provision in languages do not adequately share their expertise in managing and teaching language programmes. Similarly, some tutors working for the same provider rarely meet to exchange information, ideas or materials. The providers have taken some action to improve the quality of learning. One provider's well-designed tutor training courses, which lead to a national qualification specifically for under-qualified language tutors, is now available to all tutors teaching RBKC's programmes. Take-up of this training is good.

85. RBKC's provision in languages attracts an increasingly wide range of learners. For example, the proportion of men, at approximately 27 per cent, regularly attending classes is good. A high proportion of learners in every class speak English as an additional language, and a significant proportion of learners, at approximately 21 per cent, are from minority ethnic groups.

86. Two of the three organisations running RBKC's language programmes have developed satisfactory procedures for monitoring the quality of learning, although one organisation has not fully implemented the process. Most managers use course reviews and feedback from learners effectively to evaluate the learning programmes. The self-assessment report did not adequately include the work of all the providers. Inspectors identified additional weaknesses and gave a grade lower than that given in the report.