

INSPECTION REPORT

NVQUK.COM Ltd

01 July 2005



ADULT LEARNING
INSPECTORATE

Adult Learning Inspectorate

The Adult Learning Inspectorate (ALI) was established under the provisions of the *Learning and Skills Act 2000* to bring the inspection of all aspects of adult learning and work-based 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 aged over 16
- provision in further education colleges for people aged 19 and over
- **learnirect** 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.

Pre-inspection analysis

The resources allocated to a cycle 2 inspection are primarily determined by the findings from the previous inspection. Account is also taken of information about achievement and retention obtained from the funding body, and any significant changes in the size or scope of the provision.

Where a provider has received good grades in cycle 1, the cycle 2 inspection is relatively light. If the provider offers a number of areas of learning, a restricted sample is inspected.

Where a provider has received satisfactory grades in cycle 1, the cycle 2 inspection is less intensive and it is possible that not all areas of learning are included.

Where there are significant unsatisfactory grades from cycle 1, the intensity of the cycle 2 inspection is broadly the same as cycle 1, and all significant areas of learning are inspected.

Providers that have not previously been inspected will receive a full inspection.

Overall effectiveness

The grades given for areas of learning and leadership and management will be used to arrive at a judgement about the overall effectiveness of the provider.

An **outstanding** provider should typically have leadership and management and at least half of the areas of learning judged to be a grade 1. All area of learning grades will be graded 1 or 2.

A **good** provider should have leadership and management and at least half of the area of learning grades judged to be a grade 2 or better. A good training provider should not have any grade 4s, and few grade 3s in the areas of learning.

A **satisfactory** provider should have adequate or better grades in leadership and management and in at least two thirds of the area of learning grades. An adequate provider might have a range of grades across areas of learning, some of which might be graded 4.

Provision will normally be deemed to be **inadequate** where more than one third of the area of learning grades and/or leadership and management are judged to be inadequate.

The final decision as to whether the provision is inadequate rests with the Chief Inspector of Adult Learning.

Grading

Inspectors use a four-point scale to summarise their judgements about the quality of provision in occupational/curriculum areas and Jobcentre Plus programmes, as well as to summarise their judgements about the quality of learning sessions. The same scale is used to describe the quality of leadership and management, which includes equality of opportunity and quality assurance. The descriptors for the four grades are:

- *grade 1 - outstanding*
- *grade 2 - good*
- *grade 3 - satisfactory*
- *grade 4 - inadequate*

INSPECTION REPORT

NVQUK.COM Ltd

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INSPECTION REPORT

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROVIDER

1. NVQUK.COM Ltd (NVQUK) is a privately owned training company, formed as a partnership in April 2000, which provides training in health and social care for young people and adults throughout the United Kingdom. The company currently has 30 full-time equivalent staff and 926 government-funded learners. NVQUK deals with six major employers and operates on 189 sites. All learners are following programmes in health and social care. There are 33 advanced apprentices and 181 apprentices. In addition, the company has 630 learners following national vocational qualifications (NVQs) at level 2 and 82 learners following level 3 programmes.

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS

Grade 2

2. **The overall effectiveness of the provision is good.** NVQUK's leadership and management are good, as are its arrangements for quality improvement. The arrangements for equality of opportunity are satisfactory. The provision in health, social care and public services is good.

3. **The inspection team was broadly confident in the reliability of the self-assessment process.** The self-assessment process is well established and uses employers' and learners' views to contribute to an accurate assessment of the quality of the provider. The self-assessment process and presentation is continually updated and improved. The most recent development is the use of a database management system on the provider's intranet to gather and present self-assessment information. The resulting report identified many of the strengths and weaknesses found by the inspection team.

4. **The provider has demonstrated that it is in a good position to make improvements.** NVQUK has been effective in updating and improving the quality of its provision. For example, since the previous inspection the company has improved its learners' progress reviews, made significant improvements to help its staff and learners understand equal opportunities, and has improved its internal verification systems. NVQUK uses effective and innovative methods to improve the quality of its provision, such as electronic self-assessment and purpose-designed fast-track programmes for selected learners. The company has strategies to improve achievements on apprenticeship programmes. The number of learners leaving the programmes before completing them is diminishing.

KEY CHALLENGES FOR NVQUK.COM LTD:

- raise apprenticeship achievement rates
- produce comprehensive plans to implement the government's strategy on training in literacy, numeracy and the use of language
- improve support for learners with literacy, numeracy and language needs
- continue development and implementation of the quality improvement system

- continue to develop strategies and measures for the promotion and monitoring of equality of opportunity

GRADES

grade 1 = outstanding, grade 2 = good, grade 3 = satisfactory, grade 4 = inadequate

Leadership and management		2
Contributory grades:		
Equality of opportunity		3
Quality improvement		2

Health, social care & public services			2
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade	
Care		2	
Apprenticeships for young people	214	2	
Other government-funded provision	712	2	

ABOUT THE INSPECTION

5. The inspection concerned NVQUK's leadership and management, including equality of opportunity and quality improvement. One area of learning, health, social care and public services was inspected. The inspection took place between 28 June and 1 July 2005.

Number of inspectors	9
Number of inspection days	36
Number of learners interviewed	62
Number of staff interviewed	59
Number of employers interviewed	27
Number of locations/sites/learning centres visited	29

KEY FINDINGS

Achievements and standards

6. **Retention and achievement rates on NVQ programmes are good.** Most of NVQUK's learners are following level 2 and level 3 NVQ programmes in health and social care. Retention and achievement rates on these programmes have been consistently good for the past three years. NVQUK has appropriate strategies to improve achievements on apprenticeship programmes. Signs of improvement are evident.

7. **Learners develop very good standards in skills and knowledge.** They use their personal and professional skills in the workplace to improve the standard of care that they offer to their clients. Portfolios and assessment records confirm the good level of knowledge acquired by learners.

The quality of provision

8. **NVQUK provides good individual training and innovative learning programmes that are well matched with the needs of its learners.** Assessment practice is good in most regions. Internal verification is generally satisfactory. Learners and assessors are visited regularly by the verifier. Records are clear and well maintained. Internal verifiers do not share good assessment practice sufficiently.

9. **NVQUK staff are well qualified and well informed.** Communications between staff and managers and between regional teams within the organisation are good, and good practice is, in the main, shared effectively. External communications are equally good.

10. **NVQUK does not initially assess all its learners effectively enough** for suitability for the programme, or to establish their levels of literacy, numeracy or language skills.

11. **The company does not provide sufficient formal support for learners with literacy, numeracy or language needs.** The provider acknowledges this weakness in its self-assessment report and is currently piloting a new initial assessment and support system.

Leadership and management

12. **Training, learning and assessment are well managed.** Managers provide good resources and support for the staff and work with them to provide new and innovative programmes of training to meet the needs of individual learners.

13. **Data and information management are particularly effective and innovative.** Standard database management software is supplemented by in-house software written to meet the company's needs. Staff receive well-managed data and up-to-date, accurate reports.

14. **Quality improvement systems are well devised and managed.** An electronic self-assessment database contributes significantly to drive quality improvement. Quality assurance systems are generally strong and well established and cover most aspects of the learning programmes.

15. **NVQUK's promotion and monitoring of equal opportunities is good.** Learners in most regions have a good understanding of their rights and responsibilities and many have an equally good understanding of the wider issues of equality and diversity.

16. **The management strategy for initial assessment, learning support and skills for life is insufficiently comprehensive.** Managers have been slow to turn their attention to the shortcomings in their formal arrangements for learning support.

17. The self-assessment process is well established. All sources of evidence are collated comprehensively and staff, partners and all other stakeholders are involved appropriately. The self-assessment report is thorough and detailed and makes many of the same

judgements as those made by the inspectors.

Leadership and management

Strengths

- clear strategy for meeting sector requirements
- good management of training
- effective strategies to improve retention and achievement rates
- particularly effective and innovative data and information management
- good promotion of equality and diversity
- well-devised and managed quality improvement systems

Weaknesses

- insufficiently comprehensive strategy for initial assessment and learning support

Health, social care & public services

Care

Grade 2

Strengths

- good retention and achievement rates on NVQ programmes
- very good standards in learners' knowledge and skills development
- well-managed individual training and assessment
- good partnership working with employers
- good communications
- well-informed staff

Weaknesses

- insufficient initial assessment
- insufficient formal support for learners' literacy, numeracy and language requirements

WHAT LEARNERS LIKE ABOUT NVQUK.COM LTD:

- 'the fast-track training'
- 'feeling like an individual'
- 'shows what you can still learn'
- 'gaining qualifications'
- opportunity for personal development
- 'learning more in depth, better knowledge of the job'
- 'assessor is friendly, helpful, and always available'
- 'the way the training gives you a broader outlook'
- 'knowing what progress I am making'

WHAT LEARNERS THINK NVQUK.COM LTD COULD IMPROVE:

- the clarity of the knowledge base language
- the ability to borrow books
- the opportunities to meet with other learners as a group
- the time available to complete work at level 3 NVQ - perhaps one day each month set aside

DETAILED INSPECTION FINDINGS

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Grade 2

Strengths

- clear strategy for meeting sector requirements
- good management of training
- effective strategies to improve retention and achievement rates
- particularly effective and innovative data and information management
- good promotion of equality and diversity
- well-devised and managed quality improvement systems

Weaknesses

- insufficiently comprehensive strategy for initial assessment and learning support

18. NVQUK has a clear strategy for meeting sector requirements. Directors and managers adopt a particularly thoughtful approach to meeting health service training needs. They use well-devised long-term strategies which are supplemented by a clear set of priorities for short-term development planning. Long- and short-term plans are well matched to sector requirements. All levels of the company consult with employers to gauge these requirements. Directors have developed good links with the major contractors in the sector and pursue employers and contractors systematically to acquire new contracts. NVQUK has built its good relations and networks through a culture of continuous improvement, including improving its technical certificate and key skills training. The company is raising the number of adults who achieve NVQs in the workplace. NVQUK is developing its programmes to meet sector requirements by methods such as the introduction of its systematic training achievement retention and success programme. The company has a good business plan that is reviewed and updated quarterly to take account of new contracts, health service requirements and government targets.

19. The management of training is good. Managers focus on the quality and flexibility of training. NVQUK uses a range of training methods to achieve the very good standard of training offered to its learners. Senior managers work closely with training staff to devise, develop and continuously improve the company's training materials and methods. The recently appointed key skills co-ordinator is working with the management team and has produced a range of learner projects that effectively and thoughtfully integrate key skills requirements with those of the NVQs. For example, a number of cleverly devised projects meet application of number requirements through aspects of health training such as medication, fluid intake and health and safety. NVQUK's internal and external communications are very good. Good practice is shared well between teams, employers are involved in training, and staff are up to date and well informed. Meetings are frequent and effective at all levels. All meetings are formal and well recorded, and produce action points that are always checked and followed through from meeting to meeting. Staff appraisals and development initiatives are carried out effectively. Staff are well informed and well qualified.

20. NVQUK continues to develop effective strategies to improve retention and achievement rates. Senior managers have created an organisational focus on retention and achievement that is shared by all staff and employers. The self-assessment report clearly identifies poor achievements on apprenticeship programmes as a key weakness. The development plan outlines the company's strategy for dealing with this problem, which includes improved key skills support for tests and portfolio-building, a focus on technical certificates and key skills earlier in the programme, and the appointment of a co-ordinator for training and quality assurance. More staff have been recruited and staff development and communications are being continuously improved. Fewer learners now leave the programmes before completion or achievement of their objectives. Thorough and accurate data analysis of those learners leaving before completion of their programmes shows that those in learning are now more likely to complete their programmes than in previous years.

21. The provider has a particularly effective data and information management system. Management information software consists of an interactive self-assessment system combined with a standard database management system. This is supplemented by pivot tables written in-house to adapt the standard software to the needs of managers and staff. The database is well managed. The resulting system provides staff and managers with accurate and current reports about all aspects of their operations. For example, staff can compare their own regional retention and achievement rates with the company's national performance and against national averages such as those found in the ALI's chief inspector's annual report. Similarly useful equal opportunities reports are produced that show learners' gender, age, ethnic background and location and the effects of each on learner outcomes. Carefully controlled access levels allow individual staff to produce their own reports. The software is easy to use and accessible to all staff.

Equality of opportunity

Contributory grade 3

22. NVQUK has an effective equality and diversity policy that clearly states the company's approach to managing and promoting equality and diversity. The main policy is supplemented by an appropriate dignity at work policy supported by well-written procedures. A statement about the company's policy on the treatment of people with disabilities completes a comprehensive and effective suite of policies and procedures. The policies were produced by NVQUK in consultation with a specialist company and presented to staff in formal staff development and induction sessions. Staff are familiar with the policies, which are accessible in paper or electronic formats. Learners receive a useful abridged and simplified version of the policies in the form of a charter outlining their rights and responsibilities and the service that they can reasonably expect from NVQUK. The company commissions a specialist human resources company to manage NVQUK's human resources functions to ensure that the company meets current legislation.

23. NVQUK actively promotes equality of opportunity with employers and checks that learners are treated fairly and as stated in the policy. Senior managers conduct well-recorded high-level meetings with employers to share their equality and diversity targets. Although the equality and diversity focus in these meetings is a relatively new initiative, NVQUK managers are skilfully and tactfully introducing the concepts of targets for equality and diversity to employers. Monitoring at operational level has recently improved and is satisfactory in that there is now an appropriate focus on the importance of equality of opportunity in the workplace and throughout the training.

24. Learners in most areas have a good understanding of equality of opportunity. They

understand their rights and responsibilities and have a good grasp of the wider issues in equality and diversity. NVQUK provides a generally good induction which it then consolidates by systematic and regular reinforcement of learners' understanding.

25. NVQUK manages and monitors data relating to equality of opportunity well. It keeps comprehensive records about the participation of various groups and monitors and compares the performance of different groups of learners, particularly those groups often under-represented in the occupational area. Records of equality of opportunity discussions, and decisions made in internal meetings and in meetings with employers are comprehensive and clear.

26. Personal support for learners is generally good and managers and staff are vigilant and respond quickly to problems and complaints. However, in one area, support was judged to be weak. The company did not give sufficient attention to a small group of new and particularly disgruntled learners who joined the programme from another provider. NVQUK does not have a strong enough strategy for additional learning support. The company does not ensure that all learners in need receive literacy and numeracy support, or additional learning support. The company has identified this problem in its self-assessment report and is now taking action to deal with the weakness.

Quality improvement

Contributory grade 2

27. NVQUK has devised a range of quality improvement and quality assurance systems, which is effective and appropriate for the company. The systems have evolved through consultations with staff, learners and employers and cover all the key learner and administrative processes. Implementation has been thorough and gradual, and shared with all staff and employers through training events, meeting forums and regional managers' meetings. Systems are understood and used well by staff.

28. The self-assessment process is the key factor in the company's quality improvement system. The recently devised interactive self-assessment reporting system comprehensively collates all the sources of evidence available to answer the five questions in the Common Inspection Framework. Staff, partners, stakeholders and funding bodies all have access to this information through the self-assessment website. Levels of access are carefully controlled to ensure that the website is truly interactive. Staff have access at any time, to contribute and make their own judgements and comments about the strengths and weaknesses of the company. Although the self-assessment software is new, the self-assessment process is well established within the organisation. The resulting report is thorough, detailed and matches many of the findings of the inspection team.

29. Quality assurance is detailed in a quality monitoring plan, devised for each region, which is updated every six months to monitor and evaluate a number of the key processes. These include the observation of teaching and learning, observations of induction sessions, monthly internal verification review meetings, internal verification panel meetings, and learners' interviews which are recorded and analysed monthly. Quality assurance systems are thoughtfully devised and make good use of opportunities for staff to monitor their own performances and those of others. Improvement initiatives are discussed at the regular, combined operations and quality meetings for all key personnel. Regular audits of administrative operations are carried out in the form of monthly document audit checks of files, contracts, sign-up forms and induction documents. Generally, NVQUK handles the few complaints that it receives very well. Those complaints not dealt with at source are

reviewed and reported on systematically at operations and quality meetings.

30. Regular meetings with site managers and contractors ensure that learner and programme issues are raised continually and resolved with contributions from all those involved at various levels of the organisation. Regular employer surveys are carried out, some by contractors themselves, and actions are taken to ensure that improvements follow. The analysis of this evaluative data is posted on NVQUK's website for continual updating and interrogation by staff and partners.

31. The observation of learning and induction is a new system and has not been fully tested. No systems exist to monitor the quality of initial assessment and learning support.

AREAS OF LEARNING

Health, social care & public services

Grade 2

Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Care		2
Apprenticeships for young people	214	2
Other government-funded provision	712	2

32. NVQUK recruits its learners directly from employers, dealing with six key employers on 189 sites throughout the country. Much of the training is offered on an individual basis, with a few additional small group sessions. All assessment and training takes place in the workplace. All learners are following programmes in health and social care. There are 33 advanced apprentices and 181 apprentices, and 630 learners are following level 2 NVQ programmes. Eighty-two learners are on level 3 NVQ programmes.

Care

Grade 2

Strengths

- good retention and achievement rates on NVQ programmes
- very good standards in learners' knowledge and skills development
- well-managed individual training and assessment
- good partnership working with employers
- good communications
- well-informed staff

Weaknesses

- insufficient initial assessment
- insufficient formal support for learners' literacy, numeracy and language requirements

Achievement and standards

33. Retention and achievement rates on NVQ programmes are good. The retention rate for apprenticeship programmes was poor until the current year, during which the number of learners leaving before completing their programmes has been reduced significantly. NVQUK's strategy for improving achievement levels is beginning to improve the situation. Current learners are now achieving key skills and technical certificates at much earlier stages in the programmes. Inspectors in most regions noted the good progress being made by current learners on all programmes.

34. Learners develop good care skills and a good understanding of the requirements of care tasks. They are able to deal effectively with complex situations and in particular deal with the difficult and sometimes challenging behaviour of residents and service users. Learners are also developing a greater knowledge of care and improving their personal skills. They are able to confidently and articulately discuss the importance of individual

choice, infection control, and moving and handling techniques. Learners' portfolios demonstrate a good standard of work and many of them contain good evaluative and reflective accounts of the learners' work. Learners appreciate being able to develop their skills and most of them are keen to continue to develop their skills and to extend their knowledge.

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

LSC funded work-based learning																	
Advanced apprenticeships	2004-05		2003-04		2002-03		2001-02										
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
Number of starts	30		33		55		29	100									
Retained*	0		9		8		4	14									
Successfully completed	2		1		6		4	14									
Still in learning	23		8		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

LSC funded work-based learning																	
Apprenticeships	2004-05		2003-04		2002-03		2001-02										
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
Number of starts	135		184		158		50	100									
Retained*	0		75		39		12	24									
Successfully completed	5		10		25		12	24									
Still in learning	102		65		14		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	2004-05		2003-04		2002-03		2001-02										
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
Number of starts	679		556		715		160	100									
Retained*	0		415		483		100	62									
Successfully completed	65		286		465		100	62									
Still in learning	565		129		18		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

The quality of provision

35. Training and assessment is managed well. NVQUK's and employers' staff provide individual teaching and assessment that is sensitive to learners' needs and carried out patiently at the learners' preferred pace. Employers offer a good range of training to learners, including mandatory training to supplement NVQ or apprenticeship training. Many learners have benefited from additional training, shared with the qualified staff, on topics such as understanding dementia, palliative care and incontinence management. Apprentices make good use of technical certificate workbooks to develop their background

knowledge. Training co-ordinators arrange the timing of visits to meet the needs of individuals. Assessors often visit learners at the end of a night shift or over the weekend. NVQUK has produced a purpose-designed fast-track learning programme which is popular with learners and is producing very good achievement rates. Learning materials are well designed and produced.

36. Assessment practice is good in most regions. Assessors work with learners to produce good assessment plans that set out short- and long-term goals. Assessors and learners make good use of individual learning plans and achievement plans. Learners are clear about the assessment goals and understand what is required. Assessors in most regions consistently use a good range of assessment methods including reflective accounts, witness testimonies, question and answer sessions and observations. Assessors are meticulous in conducting assessment activities, and make frequent reference to qualification standards throughout. They consistently discuss the evidence presented in relation to the required standards, to ensure that learners understand how competence is achieved. Assessment reports are detailed in recording learners' performances, and are clearly referenced to qualification standards. Short-term action-planning is clear, and makes good use of specific targets. However, in one region, assessment practice is only satisfactory. Assessment plans show insufficient individualisation and tend to use the same methods of assessment. Learners' reflective accounts are used extensively, some of which are generalised accounts of practice or hypothetical descriptions. Some learners are not challenged sufficiently, especially at level 3 NVQ.

37. NVQUK has developed good partnerships with employers that help to support and develop the learners. All managers are fully committed to training and are actively engaged in the training process. Assessors keep them fully informed about dates of visits and the progress of each learner. Managers make good arrangements to provide appropriate accommodation for training sessions. In many cases, managers are present at formal training reviews and contribute positively. Employers' managers will often work with assessors to support learners who are having difficulties with their studies. One contractor has produced a charter which details high expectations of all learners and produces an annual evaluation for each one, which is copied to NVQUK. Regular site meetings are used to monitor training and resolve problems. Employers value the reliability of the assessors who plan their visits in advance and keep good contacts with employers. Employers welcome the good organisation of NVQUK, the progress the care assistants are making with their training programmes, the confidence they are developing and their improvements in knowledge and skills.

38. Internal verification is satisfactory. Verifiers visit all learners and assessors in the workplace at planned intervals. Visits may include verification of the learners' portfolios, learners' questionnaires or observations of the assessment process. Verification records are clear and well maintained. Internal verifiers do not share good assessment practice.

39. Resources are satisfactory. Assessors and internal verifiers have appropriate experience and qualifications. The company has a good stock of textbooks, which are available to learners for reference or loan, although in many cases, learners choose to purchase their own books. Assessors carry a range of other material to support the learners and have access to further materials. Not all learners have access to a computer or the internet.

40. Initial assessments are weak and do not contribute sufficiently to the individual learning plans. Learners following apprenticeship programmes are not aware of completing screening tests for literacy and numeracy. They do not receive feedback or properly discuss any learning needs they might have. Learners on NVQ programmes are not offered initial assessments. Although training co-ordinators discuss individual needs during induction, the onus is on learners to declare any difficulties they may experience. NVQUK has recognised this weakness in its self-assessment report and has begun to use proprietary assessment software to improve initial assessments.

41. There is not enough support for the learners' literacy, numeracy and language needs. Additional learning support is not provided consistently or routinely to learners and no English for speakers of other languages training has been offered to learners to date. Training co-ordinators are not always confident in providing literacy and numeracy support. Key skills workshops have been provided where training co-ordinators have identified a possible need, or where a learner has failed a test. In one instance, three learners identified that they had difficulties with written English and one had enrolled on a learndirect course with a local provider. No guidance had been offered by NVQUK. Although pilot projects for initial assessment and support exist, they have not had any effect on the learners to date.

Leadership and management

42. NVQUK conducts its staff inductions at a pace appropriate for the member of staff's level of knowledge and experience. Induction consists of a thorough and extensive introduction to the company, followed by a number of weeks spent shadowing a more experienced colleague. Following induction, new assessors gradually take over a caseload of learners and receive regular support from the internal verifier. The induction builds assessors' confidence by assuring them that support is readily available from the company.

43. NVQUK's managers communicate well with their teams, and communication within teams is strong and regular, with frequent contact by e-mail and mobile telephone. The company holds regular, well-attended meetings. Managers are accessible when problems arise and offer support and guidance. Training co-ordinators and assessors are well aware of company policies and procedures and feel fully integrated with the company. A range of meetings ensures that staff meet people from other regions and share their experiences and good practice. Regular contact takes place between central office and all field staff to review work and to validate learners' progress and achievements. Staff know where to find information and whom to contact for help, advice and guidance.

