

INSPECTION REPORT

Hargreaves Training Services Ltd

21 April 2006



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
- adult information, advice and guidance services (**nextstep**).

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*

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Contents

Summary

Description of the provider	1
Overall effectiveness	1
Key challenges for Hargreaves Training Services Ltd	2
Grades	2
About the inspection	3
Key Findings	3
What learners like about Hargreaves Training Services Ltd	8
What learners think Hargreaves Training Services Ltd could improve	8

Detailed inspection findings

Leadership and management	9
Equality of opportunity	10
Quality improvement	10
Engineering and manufacturing technologies	12
Retail and commercial enterprise	19

INSPECTION REPORT

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROVIDER

1. Hargreaves Training Services Ltd (HTS) is a private training company with sites in Leeds, Barnsley, Manchester and Newcastle. HTS was formed in 1967 as the training division of a national haulage organisation and has been operating in its present form since April 2001. HTS provides work-based learning programmes for young people, consisting mainly of apprenticeships, or national vocational qualification (NVQ) courses. Most of the motor vehicle engineering learners attend the dedicated training centre in Leeds for day-release training. Almost all of them are employed and work for a range of employers. This training is funded by West Yorkshire Learning and Skills Council (LSC). HTS also acts as a subcontractor, and provides lift truck driver training at its Leeds centre for other training providers. HTS holds a substantial 'Train to Gain' contract for learners in transportation, motor vehicle, warehousing and distribution. The provider also offers training in construction, but there were not enough learners in this programme for it to be included in the inspection.

2. HTS has a managing director and a finance director, an operations director and a quality and systems director. A team of senior managers has designated responsibilities for literacy, numeracy and language support, and key skills training and management information. There is a director of learning for the motor vehicle department. HTS employs 82 staff, 61 of whom are directly involved in training.

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS

Grade 2

3. **The overall effectiveness of the provision is good.** The provision in motor vehicle, transportation, and warehousing and distribution is good. Leadership and management, and arrangements for equality of opportunity and quality improvement are also good.

4. **The inspection team was broadly confident in the reliability of the self-assessment process.** The self-assessment process is thorough, inclusive and critical. The views of all staff are used effectively to reach judgements about the provision. Managers use feedback from learners and employers well in the process. Management data is used to support judgements about recruitment and achievement rates. The self-assessment report identified most of the strengths and weaknesses found by inspectors. The grades in the self-assessment report matched those given by inspectors, except for quality improvement, where inspectors gave a higher grade.

5. **The provider has demonstrated that it is in a good position to make improvements.** There are clear and well-considered priorities for how HTS can maintain and improve the quality of its provision through a period of growth. Learners' achievement rates are improving and are generally good. Most of the weaknesses identified in previous inspection reports have been successfully resolved. A detailed quality improvement plan clearly identifies how weaknesses will be resolved and strengths maintained or improved.

KEY CHALLENGES FOR HARGREAVES TRAINING SERVICES LTD:

- to maintain and improve the good quality of provision during a period of growth
- to maintain the very high standards on the apprenticeship programme in transportation
- to provide good-quality literacy, numeracy and language and key skills support for learners in all areas of learning
- to improve the progress review process for learners

GRADES

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

Grades awarded at inspection

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

Engineering and manufacturing technologies			2
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade	
Motor vehicle		2	
Apprenticeships for young people	79	2	
NVQ training for young people	2	None	
Train to Gain	9	None	
Transportation		2	
Apprenticeships for young people	33	1	
Train to Gain	239	2	

Retail and commercial enterprise			2
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade	
Warehousing and distribution		2	
Apprenticeships for young people	1	None	
Train to Gain	36	2	

ABOUT THE INSPECTION

6. Inspectors reported on and graded HTS's training provision in motor vehicle and transportation, and warehousing and distribution. All the provision was inspected in the same week and judgements were also made about leadership and management, including equality of opportunity and quality improvement arrangements.

Number of inspectors	5
Number of inspection days	18
Number of learners interviewed	20
Number of staff interviewed	32
Number of employers interviewed	12
Number of locations/sites/learning centres visited	11
Number of visits	1

KEY FINDINGS

Achievements and standards

7. **Apprenticeship framework completion rates for the driving goods vehicle programme are outstanding.** All the three apprentices who left the programme in 2004-05, completed the full apprenticeship framework within the planned training period. Eighty-two per cent of the leavers in 2005-06 also completed the full framework. Of those learners recruited in 2004-05, 95 per cent are still on programme and making good progress. All the learners on the programme have passed the large goods vehicle driving test.

8. **Progression rates are good for motor vehicle learners.** Between March 2004 and April 2006, 25 learners progressed from the entry to employment (E2E) programme to apprenticeship programmes. Twelve learners progressed from apprenticeship to advanced apprenticeship programmes. Eight previously unemployed apprentices have gained jobs.

9. **Success rates for learners on the Train to Gain programme in transportation are good.** The overall success rate for the 91 learners who left the programme in 2004-05 was 77 per cent. Fifty-one per cent of them achieved their objectives within the planned training period. In 2005-06, the success rate was 77 per cent, with 50 per cent of learners achieving their objectives within the planned training period.

10. **Some motor vehicle learners are making slow progress.** Currently there are 11 learners who have not achieved their qualification within the timescales identified in their individual learning plans. These learners have not yet completed their NVQ and key skills training, or achieved their technical certificates. HTS monitors learners' progress closely and is aware of the reasons for the slow progress. Appropriate arrangements exist to support these learners through to the successful completion of their qualifications.

The quality of provision

11. **Initial assessment for motor vehicle learners is very thorough.** Learners undergo an initial assessment of their literacy, numeracy and language skills during the recruitment and selection process. They also take an aptitude test for spatial awareness and mechanical comprehension. During induction, learners are initially assessed using an interactive computer-based programme to test their key skills. Learners also complete a self-assessment questionnaire to identify dyslexia. Those learners who display dyslexic tendencies are further assessed using a computer-based assessment. Learners identified as having dyslexia can use a wide range of effective support resources to help them with their programmes. The outcomes of initial assessment provide learners with a detailed and useful individual learning plan.

12. **Lift truck training is good.** Training is given on an individual basis, and learners observe others in training while waiting for individual instruction. Instructors are well qualified and experienced. Training focuses on safe working practices and learners are encouraged to develop good and safe operating routines.

13. **Learners working towards the NVQ in warehousing have good opportunities for gaining an additional qualification in lift truck operations.** A significant number of learners achieve this qualification. Twenty-one of the 36 current learners are taking up this option. This qualification is highly valued by learners and employers, and perceived as a relevant and useful occupational skill in warehousing and distribution operations.

14. **Support for learners is very good.** Transportation learners feel well supported by their assessors, and value the time and effort that assessors provide through a very flexible visiting schedule. This ensures that learners fully understand qualification standards and requirements. The pastoral support available for learners with personal problems is also good. Support from employers is particularly good. One transportation employer has described the programme as 'absolutely superb' and others comment on how well it meets their business needs. **In warehousing, learners receive particularly good support from HTS's staff and employers.** Assessors make every effort to provide learners with timely assessments in the workplace. Learners and assessors receive good support from the employers who value HTS's flexible approach to training and assessment. Support is good for learners who have additional learning needs. Learners value the four-weekly visits to their work placements by HTS's staff. Good follow-up actions are taken by assessors and HTS's managers if a learner is making slow progress, or is identified as at risk of leaving the programme before completing it. Many learners in this situation have been retained. Employers' support for learners on the warehousing programme is also good.

15. **Insufficient target-setting takes place for transportation and warehousing learners.** In transportation, targets are routinely set at most progress reviews, but they are not always specific or measurable enough. The reviews do not always identify a target completion date. Comments in progress reviews are often too brief and are not sufficiently detailed. In warehousing, targets are generally not specific enough. Previously set targets are not always reviewed as a matter of routine. Learners are not sufficiently involved in setting targets. Some targets are not challenging enough, while others are unrealistic. Learners take too long to gain the NVQ. HTS has recognised this weakness and has introduced new progress review paperwork, but this has not been fully implemented.

Leadership and management

16. **HTS has taken particularly effective actions to improve its provision.** The senior management team was substantially restructured in 2004 to focus more closely on the quality of the provision. Curriculum managers have been appointed to support improvements in motor vehicle, transportation, and warehousing and distribution.

Curriculum management in warehousing is now good. Retention rates are improving. The proportion of learners who have exceeded their funding periods has been reduced substantially. Managers monitor performance closely.

17. **Staff training and development are good.** HTS has a detailed annual training plan which is closely allied to business and curriculum needs. Assessors and internal verifiers are occupationally well qualified. Many have recent industrial experience, especially in motor vehicle engineering. Mentoring arrangements for new assessors and trainers are good. Staff are well supported, and the induction of new staff is thorough. Staff training in health and safety is particularly thorough, and many of them have achieved external qualifications in health and safety. HTS holds the Investors in People award. This is a national standard for improving an organisation's performance through its people.

18. **HTS's management of additional support is very effective.** The provider has introduced comprehensive arrangements for initial assessment which are particularly effective in supporting motor vehicle learners. Learners receive an initial assessment at interview and a more detailed diagnostic assessment during their induction. Those identified as needing additional help with literacy, numeracy or information and communications technology (ICT) receive individual or in-class support from the literacy and numeracy and key skills manager. Support for learners with dyslexia is particularly effective. At the time of the inspection, 45 per cent of the motor vehicle learners were receiving additional support.

19. **Equality and diversity is promoted very well.** Equality of opportunity is covered thoroughly during learners' and staff's inductions. Learners are aware of their rights and responsibilities at work. Well-produced pictorial wall displays in training rooms and offices depict anti-bullying and harassment messages. Wall calendars show the dates of religious festivals in different cultures. There are positive images of young people from diverse communities participating in training. Learners are positively encouraged to discuss equality and diversity. Learning materials are vetted carefully to ensure that they reflect the ethnic and social composition of the local communities. The monitoring and recording of learners' recruitment and achievement rates by gender and ethnic background is thorough. Targets for recruitment from under-represented groups are challenging and are discussed and monitored regularly by managers. HTS has formed good partnerships with local and national organisations to promote careers in the transport industry for women and learners from minority ethnic groups.

20. **The self-assessment process is thorough and reflects the findings of inspectors.** The self-assessment process was inclusive and critical. The views of all staff are used effectively to reach judgements about the provision. Managers make good use of feedback from learners and employers in the process. Management data is used to support judgements about learners' recruitment and completion rates. Inspectors gave the same grades as HTS for the areas of learning and for leadership and management and equality of opportunity. The internal verification arrangements are thorough.

21. Some aspects of quality assurance are weak. The procedure for the observation of learning sessions is not thorough enough. Observers complete an observation form which identifies the key strengths and weaknesses of each session. However, observers do not make sufficient comments about the level of learning taking place. Most observation reports are not critical enough and grading is too generous. Feedback is sought from learners and employers and summary reports are produced. Appropriate actions are taken to make improvements, but they are not always recorded. Staff's understanding of HTS's quality assurance policies and procedures is generally satisfactory, but some staff do not understand them clearly enough.

Leadership and management

Strengths

- particularly effective actions to improve the provision
- good staff training and development
- very effective management of additional support
- very good promotion of equality and diversity
- thorough self-assessment matches inspection findings

Weaknesses

- weak aspects of quality assurance

Engineering and manufacturing technologies

Motor vehicle

Strengths

- good progression by most learners
- good key skills achievements
- very thorough initial assessment process
- good initial advice and guidance
- very good celebration of achievements

Weaknesses

- slow progress by some learners

Transportation

Strengths

- outstanding completion rates for driving goods vehicle apprenticeships
- good success rates on Train 2 Gain programme
- good lift truck training
- good resources to promote learning
- very good support for learners

Weaknesses

- insufficient recording and target-setting in progress reviews

Retail and commercial enterprise

Warehousing and distribution

Strengths

- good take up of additional qualification in lift truck operations
- particularly good support for learners
- good management strategies to improve quality of provision

Weaknesses

- insufficient target-setting for learners

WHAT LEARNERS LIKE ABOUT HARGREAVES TRAINING SERVICES LTD:

- good mixture of background knowledge and practical training
- approachable, helpful staff
- 'earn as you learn'
- 'I like the support I get'

WHAT LEARNERS THINK HARGREAVES TRAINING SERVICES LTD COULD IMPROVE:

- the number of opportunities to do welding
- the availability of hot and cold food as opposed to vending machine food

DETAILED INSPECTION FINDINGS

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Grade 2

Strengths

- particularly effective actions to improve the provision
- good staff training and development
- very effective management of additional support
- very good promotion of equality and diversity
- thorough self-assessment matches inspection findings

Weaknesses

- weak aspects of quality assurance

22. HTS has taken particularly effective actions to improve its provision. The senior management team was substantially restructured in 2004 to focus more closely on the quality of the provision. Curriculum managers have been appointed to support improvements in motor vehicle, transportation, and warehousing and distribution. Curriculum management in warehousing is now good. Retention rates are improving. The proportion of learners who have exceeded their funding period has been reduced substantially. Managers monitor performance closely. HTS has recently revised its pay and reward structure for assessors and trainers, and several very well-qualified staff with strong industry links have been appointed recently.

23. Staff training and development are good. This strength was identified in the self-assessment report. HTS has a detailed annual training plan which is closely allied to business and curriculum needs. Assessors and internal verifiers are occupationally well qualified. Many of them have recent industrial experience, especially in motor vehicle engineering. All assessors and internal verifiers have an appropriate assessor or verifier qualification, or are working towards one. Several staff are studying for a certificate in education. Mentoring arrangements for new assessors and trainers are good. The induction of new staff is thorough and staff are well supported. Staff training in health and safety is particularly thorough, and many staff have achieved external qualifications in health and safety. All senior managers have attended health and safety training. Appraisals are used to identify and meet individual staff training needs. HTS holds the Investors in People award. This is a national standard for improving an organisation's performance through its people.

24. The provider's management of additional support is very effective. This strength was identified in the self-assessment report. Pastoral and learning support is good in the areas of learning inspected. HTS has introduced comprehensive arrangements for initial assessment which are particularly effective in supporting motor vehicle learners. Learners receive an initial assessment at interview and a more detailed diagnostic assessment during their induction. Those identified as needing extra help with literacy, numeracy or ICT receive individual or in-class support from the literacy and numeracy and key skills manager. Support for learners with dyslexia is particularly effective. At the time of the

inspection, 45 per cent of the motor vehicle learners were receiving additional support.

25. Senior managers provide clear direction for HTS. The provider's objective is to improve learners' lives by giving them the knowledge and skills necessary to work in the transport industry. Staff understand this objective and work hard to promote learning which meets the needs of learners and their employers. HTS reviews its provision carefully. It has been particularly active in promoting training opportunities in the transport industry for local school pupils aged 14 to 16, women, minority ethnic groups and hard-to-reach groups. Internal communications are good. Meetings are recorded and action plans, responsibilities and timescales are identified clearly.

Equality of opportunity

Contributory grade 2

26. Equality and diversity is promoted very well. This strength is recognised in the self-assessment report. HTS has developed detailed policies and procedures to promote equality and celebrate diversity. Equality of opportunity is covered thoroughly during learners' and staff's inductions. Learners are aware of their rights and responsibilities at work. Well-produced pictorial wall displays in training rooms and offices depict anti-bullying and harassment messages. Wall calendars show the dates of religious festivals in different cultures. There are positive images of young people from diverse communities participating in training. Learners are positively encouraged to discuss equality and diversity. Learning materials are vetted carefully to ensure that they reflect the ethnic and social composition of the local communities. The monitoring and recording of learners' recruitment and achievement rates by gender and ethnic background is thorough.

27. Targets for recruitment from under-represented groups are challenging and are discussed and monitored regularly by managers. All staff receive a quarterly newsletter to update them on changes to the legislative framework for equal opportunities. HTS has formed good partnerships with local and national organisations to promote careers in the transport industry for women and learners from minority ethnic groups. However, these initiatives have not yet resulted in the recruitment of sufficient numbers of learners from under-represented groups.

28. Staff have received training in equality of opportunity. HTS has responded appropriately to the Disability Discrimination Act 1995, the Race Relations Amendment Act 2001 and the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2000. Most of the provider's premises are accessible to learners with restricted mobility. There are appropriate arrangements for ensuring that learners whose mobility is restricted can attend training sessions.

Quality improvement

Contributory grade 2

29. The self-assessment process is thorough and reflects the findings of inspectors. HTS produced its eighth self-assessment report in December 2005. The self-assessment process was inclusive and critical. The views of all staff are used effectively to reach judgements about the provision. Managers make good use of feedback from learners and employers in the process. Management data is used to support judgements about learners' recruitment and completion rates. The report identified most of the strengths and weaknesses found by inspectors. Judgements about leadership and management were generally sound, but occasionally overstated. Inspectors gave the same grades as HTS for the areas of learning and for leadership and management and equality of opportunity.

30. HTS has comprehensive quality assurance policies and procedures, which cover all aspects of the learners' experiences. Actions taken to improve the provision are clearly identified and recorded in the provider's quality improvement plan. Regular internal audits monitor compliance with the HTS's administrative procedures. Observations and evaluations of inductions, learning sessions, progress reviews and assessments are carried out regularly. Internal verification arrangements are thorough.

31. Some aspects of quality assurance are weak. This weakness is partly recognised in the self-assessment report. The procedure for the observation of learning sessions is not thorough enough. Tutors are observed twice each year. Workplace assessments and progress reviews are also observed regularly. Observers complete an observation form which identifies the key strengths and weaknesses of each session, but they do not comment sufficiently about the level of learning taking place. Most observation reports are not critical enough and grading is too generous.

32. HTS obtains feedback regularly from learners and employers by means of a questionnaire, and summary reports are produced. However, the response rate to the questionnaires is often poor. Appropriate actions are taken to make improvements, but they are not always recorded. Staff's understanding of HTS's quality assurance policies and procedures is generally satisfactory, but some staff do not understand them clearly enough.

AREAS OF LEARNING

Engineering and manufacturing technologies

Grade 2

Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Motor vehicle		2
Apprenticeships for young people	79	2
NVQ training for young people	2	None
Train to Gain	9	None
Transportation		2
Apprenticeships for young people	33	1
Train to Gain	239	2

33. HTS provides an apprenticeship programme in motor vehicle engineering for 63 apprentices and 16 advanced apprentices. Nine learners are following a Train to Gain programme and two learners are working for an NVQ at level 2. Learners work towards a variety of NVQs and technical certificates at level 2 and 3 in vehicle maintenance and repair which includes light and heavy vehicle options, body repair and paint operations, parts personnel training, vehicle electrical and motor cycle repair.

34. The provider recruits learners from the Leeds and Wakefield areas. Most learners are recruited by referrals from Connexions and local employers. Learners complete a range of selection tests to determine the most appropriate vocational option and level of qualification for them.

35. All learners are employed by automotive companies, which include national heavy goods vehicle operators, franchised main dealerships and light and heavy vehicle service and repair garages. Learners attend a two-day induction programme followed by day-release off-the-job training at the HTS centre in Leeds. Five learners are receiving off-the-job training at Wakefield College. All staff are occupationally qualified. There are nine assessors and four internal verifiers.

36. HTS provides training in transportation for 33 learners on a young driver apprenticeship programme and for 239 learners on a Train to Gain programme. Of the Train to Gain learners, 199 are working towards an NVQ in lift truck operations at level 2, and 40 are studying for an NVQ at level 2 in driving goods vehicles. The planned length of programme is two years for the young driver apprenticeship, seven months for lift truck operations and nine months for driving goods vehicles. Learners are recruited from local employers and through referrals from youth employment services. All learners are employed in a variety of businesses in the West Yorkshire and Durham areas, which range from small haulage firms to large national distribution operations. On-the-job training is carried out by employers in the workplace, with off-the-job training delivered by HTS's staff at the Leeds training centre. All assessment is carried out by qualified HTS assessors, who have relevant occupational experience.

Motor vehicle

Strengths

- good progression by most learners
- good key skills achievements
- very thorough initial assessment process
- good initial advice and guidance
- very good celebration of achievements

Weaknesses

- slow progress by some learners

Achievement and standards

37. Learners make good progress. Between March 2004 and April 2006, 25 learners progressed from the E2E programme to apprenticeship programmes. Twelve learners progressed from apprenticeship to advanced apprenticeship programmes. Eight unemployed apprentices have gained jobs. Learners value the opportunities for progression provided by HTS.

38. Learners achieve good levels of key skills qualifications. HTS has recently developed a comprehensive and effective system to monitor learners' progress with key skills. Only seven learners achieved their key skills between 1999 and 2003. Between March 2004 and April 2006, 45 apprentices completed all of the key skills requirements for their framework. Current learners are making good progress in their key skills work.

39. Learners acquire practical skills which are valued by employers. They are able to carry out tasks completely in the workplace to clients' requirements. Learners operate machinery and hand tools confidently and correctly. They are able to work on their own with the minimum of supervision, and demonstrate a satisfactory awareness of safe working practices. HTS issues employers with a training programme handbook which enables them to support learners to achieve the practical skills necessary for their NVQ programme.

40. Some learners are making slow progress. Currently, 11 learners have not achieved their qualifications within the timescales identified in their individual learning plans. These learners have not yet completed their NVQ and key skills training, or achieved their technical certificates. HTS monitors learners' progress closely and is aware of the reasons for the slow progress. Appropriate arrangements exist to support these learners through to the successful completion of their qualification. Eight of the 11 learners are scheduled to complete the remaining aspects of their programmes within the next three months.

The quality of provision

41. Initial assessment is very thorough. Learners undergo an initial assessment of their literacy, numeracy and language skills during the recruitment and selection process. They also take an aptitude test for spatial awareness and mechanical comprehension. During induction, learners are initially assessed using an interactive computer-based programme to test their key skills. Learners also complete a self-assessment questionnaire to identify dyslexia. Those learners who display dyslexic tendencies are further assessed using a computer-based assessment. Learners identified as having dyslexia can use a wide range of effective support resources to help them with their programmes. Learners also complete a computer-based assessment to identify their preferred learning styles. The outcomes of initial assessment provide learners with a detailed and useful individual learning plan.

42. The initial advice and guidance provided for learners is good. Prospective learners are given comprehensive and professionally produced materials which give them a detailed insight into the requirements of their programmes. They are able to discuss a wide range of career routes with very experienced HTS staff. HTS provides impartial advice to learners about the most appropriate career route to meet their needs and aspirations. Learners whose career aspirations and needs cannot be met by HTS are referred to alternative sources of advice and guidance.

43. HTS celebrates its learners' achievements well. The provider organises an awards ceremony to recognise and celebrate learners' achievements from the previous year. The event is attended by representatives of the Institute of the Motor Industry. Awards are given for apprentice and advanced apprentice of the year, for the learner who has made most progress within the year, and for HTS assessors' and tutors' achievements. Learners who have achieved NVQs, apprenticeship and advanced apprenticeship frameworks, key skills, and literacy and numeracy qualifications are identified and receive public recognition. The awards are presented by local sports celebrities who have links with the communities from which HTS recruits many of its learners. Learners' achievements are also publicised in local newspapers.

44. Learners have a satisfactory understanding of the requirements of their programmes. They are able to explain the structure of their programmes and what is required to achieve the qualification. Learners can explain the NVQ units that they need to complete and they understand the importance of key skills and the technical certificate element of the framework. Learners understand how and when they will be assessed.

45. Standards of teaching and learning are satisfactory. Sessions are well planned and competently taught. Session plans clearly identify aims and objectives, learning activities and the resources to support learning. Appropriate use is made of a range of teaching and learning aids. The teaching rooms are suitable for learning. Learners are attentive and enjoy the learning sessions.

46. Assessment practice is satisfactory. Learners are assessed regularly in the workplace and appropriate assessment records are completed. Feedback is given to the learners after assessment and they demonstrate a satisfactory understanding of the assessment process.

47. The induction given to learners is satisfactory. They receive a two-day induction when

they begin training. Learners can recall this process and state that it was informative. Induction covers health and safety, equal opportunities, learners' terms and conditions, and an overview of the qualification structure. Learners receive a handbook to reinforce the material covered during induction.

48. Learners' progress reviews are satisfactory. HTS's staff complete a visit report during each visit to a learner. Reviews are carried out every 12 weeks and more frequently if necessary. Discussions cover learners' progress since the previous review, on-the-job training, health and safety, and equal opportunities.

Leadership and management

49. HTS has a range of management strategies to improve learners' progress. A manager for literacy, numeracy, language and key skills helps learners with their key skills and provides literacy and numeracy support. Additional staff have been appointed to carry out assessments and progress reviews. An experienced member of staff from the motor vehicle team has been allocated to take responsibility for monitoring learners' progress. The number of learners who have not achieved their objectives within the planned period of study has been declining for the past two years.

50. Staff training and development are good. Staff have access to a wide range of training and development initiatives to support them in their roles and to meet organisational needs.

51. Equality and diversity are well promoted. There are prominent displays of multicultural posters which celebrate different faiths and identify a range of religious festivals. Equality and diversity targets are openly displayed around the training centre as well as contact details for confidential helplines. HTS promotes its equal opportunities charter positively by means of clear explanations of equality and diversity legislation.

52. HTS identified most of the strengths and the one weakness found by inspectors. Inspectors gave the same grade as that in the self-assessment report.

Transportation

Strengths

- outstanding completion rates for driving goods vehicle apprenticeships
- good success rates on Train 2 Gain programme
- good lift truck training
- good resources to promote learning
- very good support for learners

Weaknesses

- insufficient recording and target-setting in progress reviews

Achievement and standards

53. Centrally held data about achievement rates for transportation apprentices was judged by inspectors to be unreliable. Inspectors scrutinised locally held data and found the

framework achievement rates to be outstanding. All of the three apprentices who left in 2004-05 completed the full apprenticeship framework within the planned training period. Eighty-two per cent of the leavers in 2005-06 also completed the full framework. Of those learners recruited in 2004-05, 95 per cent are still on programme and are making good progress. All the learners on the programme have passed the large goods vehicle driving test.

54. Success rates for learners on the Train to Gain programme are good. The overall success rate for the 91 learners who left the programme in 2004-05 was 77 per cent. Fifty-one per cent of them achieved their objectives within the planned training period. In 2005-06, the success rate was 77 per cent, with 50 per cent of learners achieving their objectives within the planned training period.

55. The development of learners' skills is particularly effective. Learners develop good technical lift truck or goods vehicle driving skills, and related skills and knowledge in health and safety. They also develop their personal skills and become more confident. Learners' approach to work activities also improves, as they become more focused and responsible at performing work tasks. Some learners have been given specific responsibilities at work such as organising lift truck maintenance and testing.

Programme	End Year	Success Rate	No, of learners	Provider NVQ Rate	National NVQ Rate	Provider framework rate	National framework rate
Adult training (long courses)	2004-05	overall	91	77		0	
		timely	66	51		0	
	2005-06	overall	320	77		0	
		timely	254	50		0	

For details of how to calculate overall and timely success rates please refer to the "Quality Improvement Pack" (available from the Learning and Skills Council's website: www.lsc.gov.uk).

The quality of provision

56. Lift truck training is good. Training is given on an individual basis, and learners observe others in training while waiting for individual instruction. Instructors are well qualified and experienced. Training focuses on safe working practices and learners are encouraged to develop good and safe operating routines.

57. Learning resources are good. Staff are well qualified and experienced in training and commercial operations. Assessors and verifiers have appropriate qualifications and some of them have key skills and literacy and numeracy teaching qualifications. Driver training staff are registered with the appropriate professional bodies, or are working towards this standard. All lift truck assessors and trainers have appropriate instructor qualifications. Some senior driver training staff have received training for digital tachographs, and safe and fuel-efficient driving techniques. Plans exist for this training to be made available to other driver training staff. The vehicles used for driver training are of current design and standards, and incorporate appropriate levels of technology for training. They are maintained well. Comprehensive workbooks are used to help learners develop their

understanding of the background knowledge behind the practical tasks they are required to complete for their NVQs. Logbooks of work activities are used well by goods vehicle apprentices to collect evidence of relevant work-based competencies between visits by the assessors.

58. Support for learners is very good. Learners feel well supported by their assessors, and value the time and effort that assessors provide through a very flexible visiting schedule. This ensures that learners fully understand the requirements of the programme. Pastoral support for learners with personal problems is also good. Support from employers is particularly good. One employer has described the programme as 'absolutely superb' and others comment on how well it meets their business needs. Some companies provide regular familiarisation training to those learners on goods vehicles and lift truck training programmes, to improve their awareness before they begin practical driver and operator training courses. Learners beginning the young driver apprenticeship programme with one employer have contributed to enabling the business to continue and develop. Another large national employer is very supportive of the driving goods vehicles programme, and has adopted it as routine additional training for their existing drivers.

59. Induction is satisfactory. The content and processes of induction sessions are appropriate and satisfactory in ensuring that learners have a basic awareness of the structure and requirements of their programmes. Equal opportunities, and health and safety matters are dealt with satisfactorily.

60. Initial assessment and initial advice and guidance are satisfactory. All learners receive a literacy, numeracy and language skills assessment, and are offered additional support if necessary. Additional support arrangements are good, and involve specialist HTS staff, or arrangements with a local college of further education. Learners receive adequate advice and guidance from HTS's staff before joining a programme.

61. Assessment and verification are satisfactory. Assessors' observation reports are thorough, and linked to qualification standards. Learners' portfolios are well organised, and their progress is monitored satisfactorily. Assessors have access to detailed progress information on their laptop computers. Verification sampling is well planned and recorded during the training programmes. Assessors receive detailed reports and feedback about their assessment practices. Interviews with learners carried out by internal verifiers are recorded well, as are the outcomes of internal verification standardisation meetings.

62. There is not enough recording and target-setting in progress reviews. Although short-, medium- and longer-term targets are set routinely at most reviews, the targets are not always specific or measurable enough. They do not always clearly identify a completion date. Comments in progress reviews are often brief and not sufficiently detailed. The information does not enable a clear picture to be gained of learners' progress and achievements, or of tasks to be completed for the next review. There is little evidence in progress reviews of meaningful reinforcement of key messages about equality and diversity, and health and safety. Some learners and employers do not have a clear understanding of the review process. In some cases, employers have not been invited to take part in the process.

Leadership and management

63. Leadership and management have been effective in making substantial improvements

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since the previous inspection. HTS's managers are very committed to the further development and improvement of this area of learning. A new assistant operations manager has been appointed recently for logistics training. Quality assurance is a major part of the post-holder's responsibility. Staff training and development is effective in helping assessors and instructors to keep abreast of technical and operational developments. The promotion of equal opportunities is satisfactory.

64. The self-assessment report identified many of the strengths and weaknesses found by inspectors. However, some strengths were overstated. Inspectors gave the same grade as that in the self-assessment report for this area of learning.

Retail and commercial enterprise**Grade 2**

Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
<i>Warehousing and distribution</i>		2
Apprenticeships for young people	1	None
Train to Gain	36	2

65. HTS provides training in warehousing and distribution for 36 learners on a Train to Gain programme. One learner is following an apprenticeship programme. The Train to Gain programme is normally completed in seven months and the apprenticeship typically takes two years. Most learners are recruited through HTS's promotional activities and by marketing its services to local employers. Learners are employed in a range of retailing and distribution companies. Most of the assessments are carried out by HTS's assessors in the workplace. The assessors are appropriately qualified and occupationally experienced. Some employers deliver on-the-job training for learners.

Warehousing and distribution*Strengths*

- good take up of additional qualification in lift truck operations
- particularly good support for learners
- good management strategies to improve quality of provision

Weaknesses

- insufficient target-setting for learners

Achievement and standards

66. Overall, NVQ achievement rates are satisfactory. Twelve of the 14 learners who left the programme in 2005-06 achieved the NVQ. The 37 learners who joined the programme in the current year are still in training and are making good progress with their NVQs.

67. Most learners who begin the Train to Gain programme pass the basic test for either counterbalance or reach trucks at the first attempt. Learners gain confidence and are able to understand a range of warehousing and distribution processes. All of the NVQ learners pass the basic test before proceeding to the NVQ in lift truck operations at level 2.

68. There is not enough target-setting. Short-, medium- and long-term targets are generally too broad and not detailed enough. Previously set targets are not always reviewed as a matter of routine. Learners are not sufficiently involved in setting their own progression. Some targets are not challenging enough, and others are unrealistic. Learners take too long to gain the NVQ. HTS has recognised this weakness and introduced new review paperwork, but this has not been fully implemented.

Programme	End Year	Success Rate	No, of learners	Provider NVQ Rate	National NVQ Rate	Provider framework rate	National framework rate
Adult training (long courses)	2005-06	overall	14	82		0	
		timely	0	0		0	

For details of how to calculate overall and timely success rates please refer to the "Quality Improvement Pack" (available from the Learning and Skills Council's website: www.lsc.gov.uk).

The quality of provision

69. Learners working for the NVQ in warehousing have good opportunities for gaining an additional qualification in lift truck operations. A good number of learners take this course. Twenty-one of the 36 current learners are taking advantage of the option. This qualification is highly valued by learners and employers and perceived as a relevant and useful occupational skill in warehousing and distribution operations.

70. Learners receive particularly good support from their employers and from HTS's staff. Assessors make every effort to provide learners with timely assessments in the workplace. Learners and staff receive good support from the employers, who value the provider's flexible approach to training and assessment. There is also good support for those learners who require additional learning support. They feel that the level of support they receive is a very positive aspect of their learning programmes. Learners for whom English is an additional language receive good specialist support. Assessors make four-weekly visits to work placements which are appreciated by the learners. Good follow-up action is taken by assessors and HTS managers if a learner is making slow progress or is identified as at risk of leaving before completing their programme. Many such learners have been retained. Many learners receive good practical support and encouragement from their employers' supervisors and managers.

71. Internal verification is thorough. Good planning is used to review a diverse range of evidence. New assessors are supported well by a recently introduced mentoring system. Internal verification standardisation meetings take place regularly and are well attended and recorded.

72. Initial assessment is satisfactory. Learners receive an initial assessment of their literacy and numeracy needs. HTS supports learners with additional learning needs effectively. All learners receive individual learning plans and their progress is monitored every two weeks and recorded well.

Leadership and management

73. Managers have developed good strategies to improve the provision. Many of the weaknesses identified during the reinspection in 2003 have been resolved. Managers demonstrate good, clear leadership that is focused on learners' achievements. Initiatives have been introduced to improve timely progress and achievement for learners. For example, HTS has introduced a coherent process for monitoring assessors' performances, and staff and management communicate well to develop ideas and implement further improvements. Current learners are making good progress. Warehousing programme staff

have a good team spirit. Quality assurance arrangements for auditing learner files and portfolios are satisfactory.

74. Equality of opportunity is promoted satisfactorily to learners and employers. Good emphasis is given to health and safety in the workplace. Learners' understanding of equality of opportunity, and health and safety is reinforced regularly during progress reviews. Learners are issued with handbooks which give good explanations of their rights and responsibilities.

75. The self-assessment process was inclusive and critical. HTS identified most of the strengths and weaknesses found by inspectors. Inspectors gave the same grade as the self-assessment for this area of learning.

