

Internal Report

**Key findings from ALI work-based
learning inspections: August 2001 –
November 2002**

**Evaluation and Good Practice Team
Quality and Standards Directorate
Learning and Skills Council National Office
1 March 2003**

SUMMARY OF WORK-BASED LEARNING INSPECTIONS AUGUST 2001 – NOVEMBER 2002

1. The Adult Learning Inspectorate (ALI) was established under the provision of the Learning and Skills Act 2000 to bring the inspection of all aspects of adult learning and work-based learning (WBL) within the remit of a single inspectorate.
2. The Secretary of State specified that the functions of the ALI in 2001-02 should include the inspection of WBL provision in accordance with the *Common Inspection Framework*.
3. This report summarises the key findings of the inspections of WBL provision carried out from August 2001 to November 2002.
4. 336 WBL providers were inspected between August 2001 and November 2002.

Summary of grades

5. The table below shows the number of providers awarded each grade for areas of learning, average grade by area of learning and overall numbers and percentages of grades.

Area of Learning	Number of inspections	Number of grades					Average grade
		1	2	3	4	5	
Business administration, management & professional	144	1	16	65	56	6	3.3
Construction	47	0	7	11	26	3	3.5
Engineering, technology & manufacturing	118	4	25	55	32	2	3
Foundation programmes	80	1	28	33	18	0	2.9
Hairdressing & beauty therapy	56	2	9	14	28	3	3.4
Health, social care & public services	104	3	16	41	40	4	3.3
Hospitality, sport, leisure & travel	45	1	6	19	16	3	3.3
Information & communications technology	56	0	7	25	21	3	3.4
Land-based provision	27	1	5	7	12	2	3.3
Retailing, customer service & transportation	113	0	5	56	45	7	3.5
Visual & performing arts & media	3	1	0	1	1	0	2.7
TOTALS	793	14	124	327	295	33	3.2
%	-	2	16	41	37	4	

6. The table below shows the number of providers awarded each grade, and the average grade, for Leadership and Management.

	Number of inspections	Number of grades					Average grade
		1	2	3	4	5	
Leadership and Management	336	2	44	120	139	31	3.5
%	-	1	13	36	41	9	

7. 59% of all grades awarded for areas of learning were satisfactory or better. Two areas of learning had average grades better than 3, although one of these, visual & performing arts and media, was only inspected three times.
8. 50% of work-based learning providers were judged to have satisfactory or better grades for leadership and management.

Leadership & Management: Strengths, weaknesses and other improvements needed

Of the 4,500 key findings from 336 ALI WBL inspections, a representative sample of 600 findings was used to identify common strengths, weaknesses and improvements needed.

Most frequent strengths

- Inspectors identified that internal and external communications were effective in many providers.
- External links between providers and the community, subcontractors, schools, employers etc. are very good
- There were far more strengths than weaknesses in staff development and appraisal processes. Staff training and development in particular were described as effective or good.
- Support for staff and learners were frequently identified as strengths.
- The use of feedback from learners and employers was generally good and was often used effectively to bring about improvements.

Most frequent weaknesses

- The collection and use of data for Management Information Systems (MIS) was generally found to be inadequate or poor. Learner data were quite often found to be insufficiently monitored or analysed.
- Quality Assurance policies and procedures were found to be inadequate in many providers. Most commonly, there was a lack of established quality assurance procedures and poor internal verification in many providers.
- Equal opportunities implementation was often identified as a weakness. The most common findings were the inadequate training in or promotion of equal opportunities, and weak monitoring of equal opportunities in the workplace.

- Strategic planning in providers was often weak, particularly in areas such as the planning of training programmes or ineffectiveness of strategies to deal with identified weaknesses.
- In training programmes themselves, poor management, inadequate monitoring and lack of strategy were the most common weaknesses identified.
- The monitoring of learning and training in the workplace was often found to be inadequate.

Areas most in need of improvements

- Self-assessment procedures were most frequently found to be in need of improvements in the WBL sector. The most common improvement needed was to address the lack of involvement of staff, students or external agencies in the self-assessment process.
- The need for many improvements in equal opportunities were identified. The most common improvements needed were in the monitoring and use of equal opportunities data and staff training in equal opportunities.
- Significant improvements are needed in the sharing of good practice amongst providers.

Internal document