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Good Practice:

# Leadership and management in work-based learning

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Learning+Skills Council



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# Introduction

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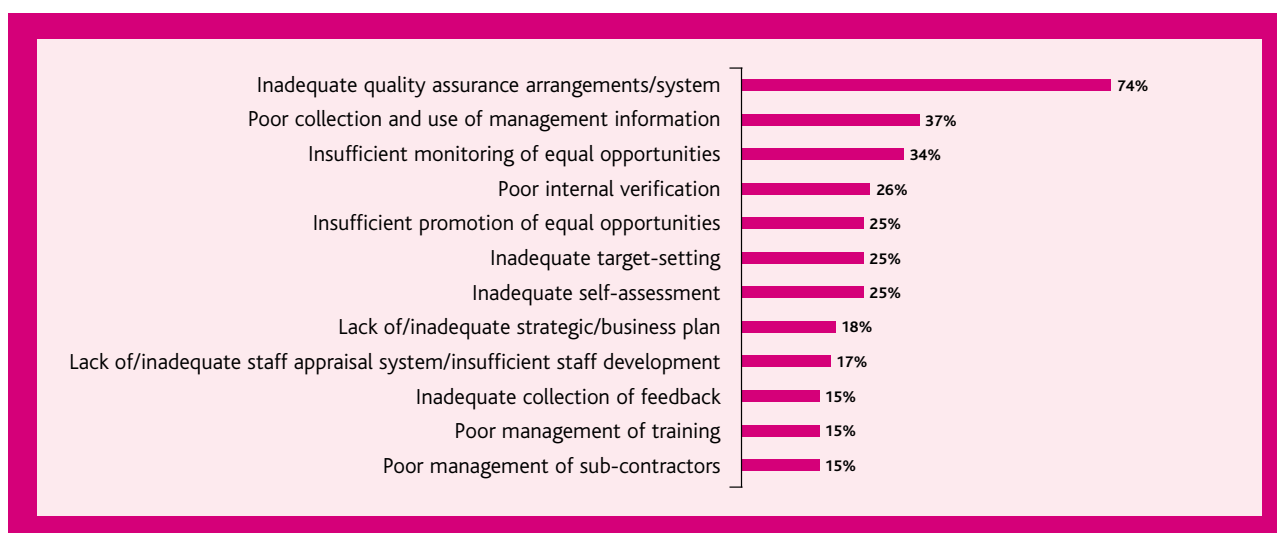
This guide has been produced for work-based learning providers who are subject to inspection by the Adult Learning Inspectorate (ALI). It focuses on the areas covered by question 7 of the *Common Inspection Framework* – “How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?”

Work-based learning providers have been inspected against the *Common Inspection Framework* since April 2001. This guide draws on the reports published up to December 2001 and subsequent visits to a sample of providers awarded grade 1 or 2 for leadership and management.

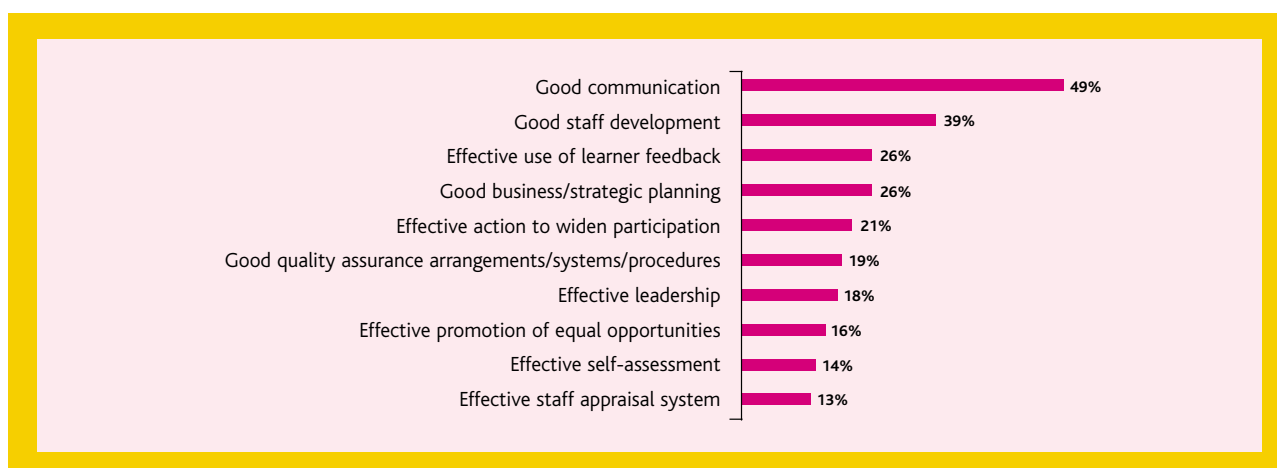
A full analysis of inspection grades can be found in *Making the grade: A report on standards in work-based learning for young people*, published by the Learning and Skills Development Agency (LSDA) in June 2002.

Analysis of the reports shows that many strengths and weaknesses are common to all providers. These are similar to those found by the former Training Standards Council (TSC) which carried out inspection of work-based learning providers between 1998 and 2001.

**Figure 1: Proportion of the first 154 ALL inspection reports which identify each factor as a weakness**



**Figure 2: Proportion of the first 154 ALL inspection reports which identify each factor as a strength**



Compared with the TSC's guidelines to self-assessment and inspection set out in *Raising the Standard*, the *Common Inspection Framework* focuses much more on the learner, the quality of the learning process and learners' achievements. Judgements about leadership and management reflect the extent to which providers enable individuals to learn effectively and achieve success.

This guide is structured around the evaluation statements relating to leadership and management in the *Common Inspection Framework*. It contains sections relating to key strengths and weaknesses identified during inspection and shown in figures 1 and 2 above.

Each section contains:

- examples of questions an ALL inspector might ask;
- guidance on good practice; and
- examples of good practice drawn from inspection reports and interview findings.

Providers may wish to focus on those sections that relate most closely to their own strengths and weaknesses.

A section at the end of the guide brings together all the areas covered in a checklist designed to help with self-assessment in leadership and management.

# Leadership and management

## The Common Inspection Framework

Presented below is an extract from page 13 of the *Common Inspection Framework*. This sets out the evaluation requirements for addressing question 7 of the framework: *How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?* It also specifies factors to be taken into account when making judgements.

### Extract from the Common Inspection Framework, page 13

#### 7. How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?

To answer this question, evaluate:

- How well leaders and managers set a clear direction leading to high quality education and training;
- How effectively, through quality assurance and self assessment, performance is monitored and evaluated and steps taken to secure improvement;
- How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve their potential;
- Where relevant, the extent to which governors or other supervisory boards meet their responsibilities;
- How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money.

*In making judgements, consider, where applicable, the extent to which:*

- *Clear direction is given through strategic objectives, targets and values that are fully understood by staff, including sub-contractors and work placement providers*

- *Demanding targets for retention, achievement, progression and employment are set and met*
- *The quality assurance arrangements are systematic and informed by the views of all interested parties*
- *Rigorous self-assessment leads to identified priorities and challenging targets for improvement*
- *Priorities are supported through responsible financial management*
- *Staff understand and are fully involved in the organisation's quality assurance arrangements*
- *The information needs of managers and other staff are met and management information is used effectively to the benefit of all learners*
- *Performance management, staff appraisal and review are effective in improving the quality of provision*
- *There are explicit aims, values and strategies promoting equality for all that are reflected in the provider's work*
- *There are effective measures to eliminate oppressive behaviour, including all forms of harassment*
- *There are effective procedures for dealing with appeals and complaints*
- *Governors or other supervisory boards effectively oversee the provider's strategic direction, and regularly monitor the quality of provision and their own performance*
- *The 'best value' principles of comparison, challenge, consultation and competition are applied in securing resources and services*
- *Efficient and effective use is made of resources*

Figure 3 illustrates the relationship between the evaluative statements of the Common Inspection Framework (shown in the shaded bands) and the different sections of the guide (shown on the rim of the circle).

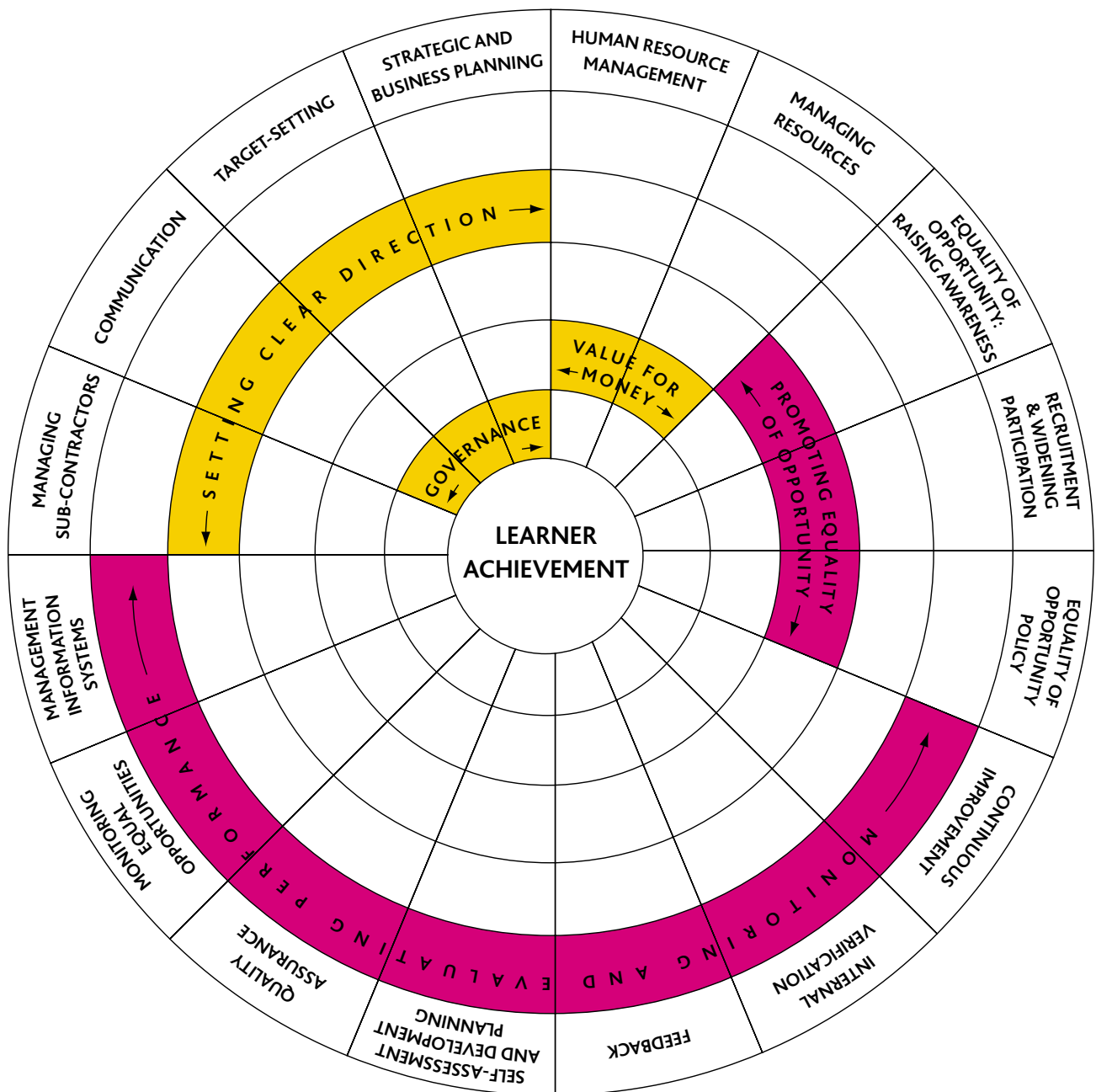


Figure 3

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## The theory of leadership and management

Leadership is the process of influencing the thoughts and behaviour of others. It is about getting people to move in the right direction, gaining their commitment and motivating them to achieve their goals. Leaders need to achieve the task in hand and at the same time to maintain effective relationships with individuals and groups of individuals. All staff who have responsibility for others, including learners, are leaders. To be effective in raising achievement and supporting all learners, leaders need to demonstrate the attributes shown below when carrying out their roles and responsibilities.

A survey<sup>1</sup> undertaken by the Industrial Society in 1997 asked respondents to rank the importance of 35 factors in leader behaviour. The top 10 factors identified were:

### People value leaders when they:

1. Show enthusiasm
2. Support other people
3. Recognise individual effort
4. Listen to the ideas and problems of individuals
5. Provide direction
6. Demonstrate personal integrity
7. Practice what they preach
8. Encourage teamwork
9. Actively encourage feedback
10. Develop other people

Good managers use people and resources effectively in order to get things done. There are four key management processes:

### 1. Planning

- setting objectives and targets; and
- developing strategies to meet them.

### 2. Organising

- defining the structure of the organisation;
- staffing the organisation appropriately; and
- establishing communication networks.

### 3. Directing

- motivating staff to perform tasks;
- enabling staff to work together in teams; and
- ensuring staff have the necessary skills and knowledge to do their jobs.

### 4. Controlling

- collecting and analysing management information to inform decision-making;
- monitoring and evaluating performance and taking steps to secure improvement; and
- reviewing the structure of the organisation to ensure that objectives can be met.

When answering question 7 of the *Common Inspection Framework*, providers need to evaluate how effectively they carry out these processes. All staff, including trainers and assessors, are involved in them. Some examples are given in Table 1 on page 7.



Table 1: Management processes performed by managers, trainers and assessors within work-based learning

Key Processes	Managers	Trainers & Assessors
Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop long-term plans and detailed operational plans and policies for the organisation to achieve its goals</li> <li>• Set objectives and targets at organisational and departmental level and for individual staff</li> <li>• Develop strategies and policies that show how the organisation will meet its objectives and targets</li> <li>• Make clear commitments to tackling discrimination and promoting equality of opportunity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plan individual learning programmes for learners which meet their needs and aspirations</li> <li>• Plan the co-ordination of on- and off-the-job training</li> <li>• Plan schemes of work for learning programmes</li> <li>• Plan arrangements for assessment and internal verification</li> </ul>
Organising	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop appropriate organisational structures to ensure that objectives can be met</li> <li>• Establish internal and external communication networks with sub-contractors, employers, funding bodies and other key partners involved with training</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communicate with learners</li> <li>• Communicate with team colleagues and others in the organisation</li> <li>• Communicate with sub-contractors and employers and other key partners involved with training</li> </ul>
Directing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Motivate staff, sub-contractors and employers to perform required tasks</li> <li>• Ensure staff and sub-contractors have appropriate knowledge and skills to undertake what is required of them</li> <li>• Provide appropriate training and development for all staff to ensure that the organisation can meet its objectives</li> <li>• Ensure staff are aware of their role in delivering equality of opportunity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Motivate learners to achieve their learning objectives and qualifications</li> <li>• Provide support for learners</li> <li>• Provide a safe learning environment</li> </ul>
Controlling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish management information systems to collect and analyse information to inform decision making</li> <li>• Review the progress of the organisation, departments and individuals in meeting objectives</li> <li>• Review organisational structures to ensure objectives are met</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review progress of learners against their individual learning plans</li> </ul>

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# Strategic and business planning

## Questions an ALI inspector might ask:

- How is strategic planning undertaken?
- Is there a written plan that reflects the vision for the future, the provider's purpose and values and that sets out objectives and strategies for achieving them?
- How does the plan focus on improving the learner's experience and raising achievement?
- To what extent are supervisory boards involved in determining strategy and setting direction?
- Is there a detailed annual business plan?
- Does the business plan set out clear objectives and targets?
- How are staff involved in strategic and business planning?
- How are plans shared with employers, sub-contractors and key partners?

## Extract from question 7 of the Common Inspection Framework

- *Leaders and managers set a clear direction leading to high quality education and training*
- *Clear direction is given through strategic objectives, targets and values that are fully understood by staff, including subcontractors and work placement providers*
- *Governors or other supervisory boards effectively oversee the provider's strategic direction*

All work-based learning providers should have a clear sense of purpose to ensure that training is good and that learners are successful. This sense of purpose should be shared by all staff and key partners, including employers and sub-contractors. It should be embedded in providers' strategic and business plans.

Strategic planning is needed to establish the future direction of any business. It involves undertaking a review of current activities and asking the following questions:

- Where are we now?
- Where do we want to be in the future?
- How do we get there and what strategies do we need to put in place?
- Is our self-assessment effective in identifying our strengths and weaknesses?
- How do we address our weaknesses and build on our strengths?

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Strategic plans often set out a long-term strategy for a period of three to five years. They include:

- The *vision* for the organisation – this may be a statement of where the provider sees itself in the future e.g. *to be recognised as the leading supplier of Life Skills training by 2004 in West Mercia*.
- The *mission* of the organisation – this describes what the provider intends to do e.g. *to provide high-quality training to Modern Apprentices working in the engineering field*.
- The *values* of the organisation – these govern the way in which the provider operates and underpin its relationships with learners, employees, employers, sub-contractors, funding bodies and other key partners e.g. *we will promote equal opportunities in all aspects of our business and with all our stakeholders*.
- *Business objectives* – these describe what the provider wants to achieve in order to fulfil its mission. They will be complemented by specific targets e.g. *to raise Foundation Modern Apprenticeship framework completion rates in retail to 85% by the end of 2003/4*. In setting business objectives, providers will need to take account of the objectives in their local Learning and Skills Council's strategic plan.
- The organisation's *key strategies* – these are the ways in which the provider will realise its vision, fulfil its mission, achieve its objectives and demonstrate its values.

A strategic plan is likely to be a relatively short document. In contrast, a business or operational plan will be more detailed. It should give details of how the objectives in the strategic plan will be achieved, focusing on the next 12-month period. The plan should include details of how equality of opportunity will be implemented.

Key elements to include in a business or operational plan are:

- *Business objectives* – these cover all aspects of the organisation's business and may be intermediate milestones towards achieving the objectives of the strategic plan. They should be supported by specific targets and relate to learners' experience.
- *Products and services* – the plan should include brief descriptions of the products and services that the provider offers. It will include the range of learning programmes and key strengths of each.
- *Marketing* – this provides information on how the organisation intends to market its products and services to prospective learners and other clients such as employers and advisory and information services. It describes how the provider will attract under-represented groups and work with referral agencies. It outlines proposed publicity materials and campaigns, and gives details of key competitors. It might provide information on the overall size of the market i.e. the potential number of learners within a geographical area.
- *Finance* – this provides financial projections including the profit and loss account, cashflows and balance sheets. It identifies the funding requirements and funding sources.
- The *management and staff structure* needed to deliver the business objectives.
- *Staff development* – this describes the training and development staff need to help the organisation achieve its objectives.
- *Implementation* – this describes the strategies to be used to ensure that the business objectives will be achieved.

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It is vital that staff at all levels take part in strategic and business planning. This gives a clear shared sense of purpose. Where supervisory boards exist, they should play a key role in determining strategy and providing direction. Strategic and business plans should be shared with key partners such as employers and sub-contractors.

Progress in implementing business plans and achieving the objectives and targets within them should be reviewed regularly. A record of progress should be shared with staff and key partners.

## Examples of good practice

**Huddersfield Textile Training Ltd (HTT)** has long established systems for strategic and business planning. The current strategic plan covers a three-year period. It outlines the company's main areas of activity, potential areas for new activities, estimates in growth of membership companies and learners, and financial projections including requirements from external funding sources. The plan focuses on where the company sees itself now and where it would like to be in three years' time. It is prepared by managers and the chief executive and subsequently approved by the board.

To assist with the implementation of the strategic plan the company also produces a detailed business plan each year. This sets out specific objectives for both the company as a whole and individual departments. Each objective has a number of associated targets. The plan specifies who has responsibility for the achievement of each target. Staff are actively involved in setting the targets within their own department. The company produces separate financial plans that are closely aligned to the objectives and targets in the business plan. Progress towards the achievement of targets is reviewed at quarterly management meetings. Failure to meet targets is usually reflected in the profit and loss account. Departmental managers also discuss progress towards targets with their teams.

The chief executive provides a quarterly progress report to the board. Each department contributes to an annual written report on the implementation of the business plan. All staff are involved in preparing their departmental contribution. The annual report forms the basis for planning the following year's business plan and is submitted to the board for approval, together with the business plan for the forthcoming year.

The company believes that there are many benefits to its strategic and business planning activities, including:

- The business plan tells all members of staff what the company wants to achieve and helps them to develop a shared sense of purpose.
- The business plan enables the company to measure its achievements clearly and accurately.

## A and R Training Services Ltd

has well-established and effective procedures for its planning processes. These lead to a three-year strategic overview and a more detailed annual business plan. All staff have copies of these documents. Specific management meetings are held twice yearly to review strategy.

The strategic overview takes account of the company's current position, the shared aspirations of all staff, the company's strengths and weaknesses and the opportunities and threats facing the company, both internally and externally. Information from a variety of sources is considered during the development of the strategy. These include management and financial information, customer feedback, results of audits, human resource information and a market analysis.

The market analysis is the result of managers' determined efforts to keep up-to-date with the training industry and the sectors in which they operate. Knowledge is gathered throughout the year from many sources including Government announcements, provider network meetings, liaison groups, courses, events and press releases. In addition the company gathers information through its strong links with other providers.

All staff are encouraged to draw on their experience in the field in order to assist with strategic planning. For example, through her work in a care home, a care assessor found out that changes to the law were planned which might mean that all people working in a care home would be required to have a relevant qualification. She therefore suggested that the company should plan to respond to this need.

Market analysis reports are drawn up annually relating to each occupational area and each type of programme. The reports take account of information collected by managers and staff throughout the year.

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# Target-setting and monitoring performance

## Questions an ALI inspector might ask:

- Are SMART targets set for everyone, including all staff and learners?
- Are targets set for learner retention and achievement rates and the proportion of learners progressing to further training or employment?
- Are staff and learners aware of their targets and have they been involved in setting them?
- Is accurate information available to staff to help them in setting targets?
- How is progress towards targets monitored and recorded?
- Is appropriate action taken where progress towards targets is inadequate?
- Is success in achieving targets celebrated?

## Extract from question 7 of the Common Inspection Framework

- *Demanding targets for retention, achievement, progression and employment are set and met*

The achievement of targets can provide a focus for all activities. When all those involved in training strive to achieve demanding targets the quality of provision can be improved. Targets can be set for all aspects of the business, for example for:

- retention rates;
- achievement rates;
- the proportion of learners progressing to further training or employment; and
- recruitment of learners from under-represented groups.

Targets need to be SMART, that is:

- specific – clear, straightforward and understandable;
- measurable – progress towards them can be measured;
- achievable – challenging but within reach given the resources available;
- realistic – based on accurate information; and
- timebound – specific dates and times are set for achieving targets.

Accurate information from a wide range of sources should be used when setting targets. This may include internal data, and local or national benchmarking data. Inaccurate information may result in specific targets being neither achievable nor realistic. For example a target to increase the number of Life Skills learners will depend on

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accurate information provided by the local Connexions Service on the likely number of such learners.

Targets should be set at all levels within an organisation. Those for the organisation as a whole should link clearly to the objectives in the business plan. Targets should also be set for teams or departments, individual staff and learners. Work-based learning providers may also set targets for sub-contractors. In some cases the targets are originated by managers who then seek agreement from staff, learners, sub-contractors and employers. In others the targets are developed from the views of staff, learners, sub-contractors and employers. Whatever approach is adopted, what matters is that all those who contribute to the achievement of targets know what they are and consider them to be achievable.

Progress towards achieving targets should be monitored regularly. Useful forums for discussing progress towards targets include senior management meetings, board meetings, staff meetings, one-to-one meetings between managers and staff and progress reviews with learners.

Progress towards achieving targets can be reported in minutes of meetings, learner progress reviews, progress charts displayed on walls, in company reports or in newsletters for staff or employers. It is vital that where targets are not being met, or progress towards achieving them is slower than desired, the reasons for this are identified. Appropriate courses of action should then be agreed and implemented. Such actions might be a consideration of whether adequate resources have been provided, providing additional help for learners or specific training for staff.

It can be highly motivating for individuals and the whole organisation to achieve challenging targets. Providers should find ways to celebrate learners' achievements, for example through awards ceremonies.

Extract from the inspection report of the  
**Family Learning Group**

*The Family Learning Group's staff agree individual training plans with learners after an initial assessment of their learning needs. These plans are reviewed and updated each month at learners' progress reviews. Individual training plans have recently been revised and now include up to five specific, short-term targets. The targets relate to attendance, behaviour and punctuality, as well as literacy and numeracy. Learners understand their individual targets. The targets allow them to focus on achievement.*

**NG Bailey** – Good practice box from inspection report

*Apprentices are encouraged to participate in various award schemes run by a number of trade organisations. Their success on these schemes is celebrated in several ways, including coverage in NG Bailey's publications, award ceremonies and achievement display areas positioned throughout the training centres. The display areas show certificates, photographs and letters of commendation. This has created a high level of interest among apprentices and has contributed to their motivation.*



### Examples of good practice

**QUEST** sets targets at three different levels: for the company as a whole, for teams, and for individual members of staff. Company targets are set in relation to the strategic objectives identified in the company's annual business plan. These include targets for the recruitment of trainees, the proportion of trainees who achieve NVQs and the proportion who complete their training programme. Managers and staff contribute to the preparation of the business plan by putting forward ideas for the direction and development of the company and by suggesting goals and realistic targets. Progress towards the achievement of company targets is reviewed regularly by both the management team and during staff meetings. Where insufficient progress towards targets is made, action plans are developed. The implementation of the plans is intended to ensure that the targets are reached.

Company targets are broken down into measurable targets for teams. Individual members of staff are set targets that reflect the priorities of their team and the company. The retail team are set targets for the number of learners, the proportion who

complete their framework and the frequency of assessment visits. Staff are set targets relating to the progress and achievement of the learners for whom they are responsible, and for professional development. Progress towards targets is rigorously monitored during monthly meetings with each member of staff. At the end of the meeting a target sheet is produced detailing agreed targets for the period up to the next meeting. This provides the focus for the next review.

Staff at **QUEST** believe that there are many benefits to be gained from the process of establishing clear targets and monitoring progress towards their achievement including:

- helping to maintain learners' progress;
- identifying learners who are not progressing;
- knowing if the company is achieving its overall objectives; and
- providing a clear picture of what it is expected of staff.

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# Management information systems

## Questions an ALI inspector might ask:

- Is there a central system for collecting and recording learner data?
- How is it kept up-to-date?
- Is data analysed?
- Does the analysis include information on learner achievement, retention and progression rates?
- How do managers use the data to monitor progress and make decisions?

## Extract from question 7 of the Common Inspection Framework

- *The information needs of managers and other staff are met and management information is used effectively to the benefit of all learners*

Management information systems collect and analyse data to provide information that can be used in making decisions. Information about learners and their progress can be used to plan ways of improving training and raising quality. Providers need to decide what information on learners they will need to make decisions. Whilst funding bodies will require data, the primary purpose of management information is to help managers to manage. The individualised learner record (ILR) required by the LSC includes a range of learner data in a standard format in order that national comparisons can be made. It also provides a rich source of management information.

Examples of the data required on learners include:

- age, gender, ethnicity and disability;
- additional learning needs;
- start date and completion date;
- learning programme, including qualifications aimed for; and
- qualifications achieved.

Details of the requirements of the ILR are available on the LSC website. Circular 02/03 *Data Collection: Collection arrangements on learner data*, sets out the Council's strategy for collecting data on learners.

Most providers use specially designed software to store and analyse data on learners. Computerised systems are usually more efficient than paper-based systems and allow for more effective

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analysis. A centralised system enables managers to maintain a clear overview of learners' progress. The information managers use can relate to:

- the performance of different cohorts of learners. Managers may need to investigate why particular cohorts perform better than others;
- the proportion of learners who complete their training programme within the scheduled timescale. Managers may need to investigate why some learners need more time than others to complete their training and whether changes to the programme are needed;
- the proportion of learners who fail to complete their learning programme. Managers will need to find out the reasons for learners failing to complete their programmes. These could relate to weaknesses in learner support, poor initial assessment or learners being placed on inappropriate programmes;
- the proportion of learners who progress to employment or further learning. Managers may need to check that job search activities are appropriate; and
- the proportion of learners from different groups and their achievement rates. Managers may need to check that equality and diversity are promoted adequately.

### Examples of good practice

**QUEST** uses Microsoft Access to store and analyse data on learners. The information collected includes:

- gender, ethnicity and special needs;
- learners' previous experience;
- details of previous qualifications and achievements;
- details of learners' programmes including NVQ units and qualifications to be achieved;
- expected length of the programme;
- progress towards units and qualifications;
- review and assessment dates;
- destinations on leaving; and
- the length of time learners are on the programme.

This data can be analysed in different ways to meet the needs of managers, staff, employers, funding bodies and the ALL.

Staff can use the system to:

- monitor the progress of individual learners towards the completion of qualifications and frameworks;
- identify differences in progression, retention and achievement levels between different occupational areas and programmes;
- find out whether there are differences in the achievement rates of males and females or between those from different ethnic groups; and
- check that reviews and assessment visits have been carried out in accordance with planned arrangements.

The information obtained enables managers to identify where changes and improvements are necessary. For example, **QUEST** managers identified low levels of retention in certain areas. They have taken a number of actions to improve retention including revising the initial assessment and induction processes, revising individual learning plans and increasing the frequency of assessments.

**QUEST** has given responsibility for the development and maintenance of the management information system to a full-time member of staff. This is to ensure that the system can always provide accurate, up-to-date information to support decision making.

**QUEST** staff value the management information system because:

- it allows managers and staff to know at any time, the point that a learner has reached within their training programme; and
- it enables managers and staff to measure progress towards the company, team and individual targets.

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# Communication

## Questions an ALI inspector might ask:

- Do staff have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities and how these relate to those of colleagues?
- How are staff kept fully informed of company objectives, targets, policies, procedures, standards of performance required and of any proposed changes that may affect their work?
- Are there regular opportunities for staff to discuss issues and to share ideas and good practice?
- Are minutes of meetings kept? Do they clearly identify action points and responsibilities?
- How is regular contact maintained with external partners, including sub-contractors and employers?
- How are external organisations kept informed of any developments that affect the learner's experience?
- Are there written agreements that set out the responsibilities of sub-contractors and employers?

Although there is no specific evaluation requirement in the *Common Inspection Framework* relating to communication, there are many references to the responsibilities of board members, staff, employers and sub-contractors. Good communication can enable everyone to be clear about their responsibilities and help to ensure that learners receive the support that they need.

It is estimated that 80% of management time is spent communicating with others and there are many ways in which breakdowns in communication can occur. In large organisations with complex structures, communication lines may be long and information may be misinterpreted by different groups at different times or lost altogether.

An effective internal communication system helps:

- staff to have a clear understanding of their roles, duties, obligations and how and when work is to be carried out and completed;
- staff to understand how their roles relate to others in their team and other departments in the organisation. Lack of this understanding can result in ineffective teamwork or several 'mini-organisations' operating within the overall organisation, each with their own way of doing things;
- staff to be fully aware of company objectives, targets, policies, procedures and performance standards;
- managers to keep staff informed of their plans and any proposed changes in organisation structure that may affect their work; and
- management to gather the views of staff on, for instance, the effectiveness of their instructions, whether work can be completed with available resources, and how working practices can be improved.

It is important to use a variety of techniques. Many providers hold regular meetings to discuss organisational issues and learners' progress and their performance and to share ideas and good practice. Meetings allow staff to seek clarification on issues and to provide feedback. Written minutes with actions allow the key points to be recorded and provide a reminder to staff of important information and what is expected of them.

Written communication needs to be clear, simple, brief and accurate and can be referred back to at a later date.

Whatever method of communication is used, consideration should be given to the needs of those with hearing or visual impairment. For example, typeface and colour can make a real difference to the readability of written material.

**QUEST** training - Good practice box from inspection report

*Good practice appears as a standard agenda item at all team meetings. This provides the opportunity for members of different occupational teams to share good practice. The programme of training observation also gives rise to the sharing of good practice.*

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**Darley Business Training Ltd** - Good practice box from inspection report

*Care staff have meetings with their team leader every month. At these, they discuss the progress of each apprentice, help and support the apprentices and their employers need, the allocation of new apprentices to assessors, effective ways of helping apprentices complete NVQ units, and any problems which have arisen. Sometimes, apprentices' work is used as case studies for identifying effective ways to help apprentices to succeed.*

External communication must be as effective as internal communication. Providers should maintain good communication with employers, sub-contractors, funding bodies, referral agencies and other key organisations. The provider should keep in touch with external organisations through face-to-face meetings where possible and also through telephone calls, e-mails, memos and newsletters. Written agreements are important to ensure clarity regarding respective roles and responsibilities.

### Example of good practice

#### MEAT East Anglia Trades (Ipswich) Ltd

has a structured programme of meetings. These ensure that staff are kept well informed, and understand their roles and responsibilities. Staff meetings for all staff are held every six weeks. There is a standard agenda which includes:

- action points from the previous meeting;
- progress of individual learners and any specific problems or support requirements;
- implementation of the development plan; and
- management information reports including retention and achievement rates, average length of stay and equal opportunities monitoring data.

Minutes are produced and circulated within three working days of the meeting. These contain action points and indicate who is responsible for each action.

Individual learning programmes are reviewed every three to six months. This involves a meeting of trainers and assessors at which the overall programme and the way in which training is implemented are reviewed. Schemes of work and individual learning programmes are discussed. The views of employers and their needs regarding additional training for learners are taken into account.

Internal verifier/assessor meetings take place every eight weeks. As many assessors are work-based assessors, meetings are often held at employers' premises. The meetings provide opportunities to share assessment practices and discuss health and safety issues, other issues affecting assessment and feedback on external verifiers' visits.

Staff maintain regular contact with learners through visiting them in the workplace, off-the-job training and text messaging.

External communication is considered as important as internal communication. Local employers play a central role in the training programmes. They are kept well informed about the training process and participate with enthusiasm. Learners are visited in their workplace at least once every four weeks by a trainer or assessor. Learners who are based too far away from the training centre to attend off-the-job training sessions are visited more frequently. The managing director meets each employer once a year and keeps in touch by telephone between visits. She uses a simple card system to record conversations with employers. This can be referred to in subsequent conversations.

Newsletters and articles of interest from trade magazines are sent to employers. These relate to, for example, changes in legislation, examples of good practice and product development.

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# Human resource management

## Questions an ALI inspector might ask:

- Does the provider have written and effective policies and procedures for the recruitment and selection, induction, appraisal and training and development of staff?
- How is the implementation of these policies and procedures monitored?
- How is the impact of the arrangements on quality evaluated?

Good training needs good staff. Providers must recruit staff with appropriate expertise and qualifications. Appraisal and performance management systems are used to monitor the performance of staff and identify training and development needs and the best way to meet them.

### Extract from question 7 of the Common Inspection Framework

- *Performance management, staff appraisal and review are effective in improving the quality of provision*

Organisations aim to make the best use of their staff by managing this 'human resource' (HR) effectively. HR policies and procedures cover the recruitment and selection of staff, induction, performance appraisal and staff training and development. They should ensure fairness in order to appeal to a broad range of potential employees.

For recruitment and selection arrangements to be effective they should include:

- the process for identifying the need for new staff;
- clear job descriptions and person specifications;
- appropriate advertising of vacancies;
- comprehensive information for applicants;
- appropriate selection criteria and a process which will enable performance against these criteria to be measured;
- procedures for informing applicants of the outcome of the selection process and providing feedback on their performance;
- procedures for offering posts to successful applicants; and
- procedures for rigorous monitoring of the recruitment and selection process.



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All elements of the arrangements should include a consideration of the implications for equality and diversity.

Induction is the process which helps new members of staff settle in to the organisation and their new job. Established staff will also need induction to any new roles that they take on. Research evidence shows that organisations that provide effective induction for staff are more likely to retain them for a longer period than organisations that do not. Improvement in an organisation's ability to retain staff will be reflected in a reduction in the resources needed for recruitment.

Induction usually provides an introduction to the organisation and to the job itself. Induction to the organisation covers:

- information about the organisation;
- conditions of service;
- pay and benefits;
- health and safety;
- equality of opportunity policy;
- other company policies, procedures and working arrangements; and
- arrangements for staff training.

During induction to their job new employees are:

- briefed about their role and what is expected of them;
- introduced to members of their team; and
- given information about key contacts.

The staff appraisal process helps employees to identify ways of improving their performance. Usually, employees have an appraisal interview with their line manager. The appraisal policy should include how often appraisal interviews are to be carried out. Typically, appraisal interviews are

carried out between one and three times a year. Before the interview the line manager may obtain views of colleagues about the employee's performance. During the interview, the employee's performance is reviewed, in particular the extent to which the employee has achieved the targets set at the previous interview. New targets are set and the employee's training and development needs established. An employee may also be informed of his or her suitability for promotion. A written record is kept of appraisal findings and the decisions taken. It is usual for both the employee and the line manager to sign the written record to indicate agreement.

**Oracle Training Consultants Ltd** – Good practice box from inspection report

*The appraisal process is very effective. All staff participate in a monthly review process that assesses their achievements against targets set. There has been initial training on the process of encouraging staff to reflect on their achievements and areas for improvement. This information is carefully recorded and an equally thoughtful and succinct response is given by line managers. This process feeds directly into the appraisal process of a six-monthly review and yearly appraisal. There are extensive opportunities for staff development. Training needs are recorded at each stage of the process. Staff have participated in numerous training courses to enable them to improve their own performance, gain qualifications and add to the quality of the company. All training is supported financially by the company. The company gained the Investors in People Standard in June 2000.*

Following appraisal, a training and development plan should be prepared for each member of staff. This specifies how the employee's training and development needs will be met. A record should be maintained of training received by each member of staff.

### Example of good practice

**Huddersfield Textile Training's** chief executive is appraised annually by the board. Appraisal centres on the extent to which objectives in the business plan have been achieved. The chief executive appraises the performance of all managers and they then appraise the performance of each member of their team. All staff complete a self-assessment prior to their appraisal and their findings provide a focus for discussion during the appraisal meeting. Examples of questions employees are asked during their appraisal include:

- what have your major achievements and disappointments been during the last 12 months?
- what additional skills do you require in order to do your job well?
- what ideas do you have for making your work more productive?
- what are your objectives and priorities for the next 12 months?
- what additional training and development will help you achieve your objectives?
- what difficulties do you need to overcome?
- have there been any significant changes in your job in the last 12 months? and
- what changes would you like to make in your job?

Following appraisal, a personal development plan is produced for each member of staff. This identifies their training and development needs and how they will be met. Each member of staff maintains a record of their own continuing professional development (CPD).

Managers at HTT believe that their staff appraisal system has:

- ensured that staff receive the training and development they need to help the organisation meet its business objectives;
- motivated staff; and
- helped to make staff feel valued.

### Herefordshire Group Training Association's

2000-2002 business plan states that 'staff are the determining factor in the success of the organisation'. It aims to ensure that the working practices of staff are kept up-to-date. Staff training is seen as a key factor in helping the organisation achieve its objectives.

Appraisals take place twice a year. Details of the appraisal process are included in the staff handbook. During appraisal interviews, staff are set personal and professional objectives and identify the training and development they need to achieve them. All staff have personal development plans that are reviewed regularly. Staff are expected to take responsibility for their own development and to identify the impact their learning has had on their performance and the benefits for learners.

The organisation expects that, while new staff are competent practitioners who are able to work with young people and communicate well, they may need training in their specific role within the company. For example all new engineering staff attend a residential two-week course for instructors.

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# Managing sub-contractors

## Questions an ALI inspector might ask:

- Are there formal agreements with sub-contractors that describe their roles and responsibilities?
- Is there regular communication with sub-contractors?
- How effectively is sub-contractors' performance monitored?
- How are the provider's quality assurance arrangements applied to sub-contractors?
- What action is taken to address weaknesses in sub-contractors' provision?
- How are sub-contractors involved in self-assessment and development planning activities?
- How do sub-contractors promote equality of opportunity?
- How do sub-contractors demonstrate compliance with statutory requirements for equality of opportunity?

## Extract from question 7 of the Common Inspection Framework

- *Clear direction is given through strategic objectives, targets and values that are fully understood by staff, including subcontractors and work placement providers*

Many providers choose to sub-contract or 'buy-in' certain parts of the training process. Usually, they do this when they cannot provide all the training themselves. For example, they may sub-contract off-the-job training to a college of further education or assessment to organisations that provide assessment services. However, overall responsibility for ensuring that all learners receive high-quality training rests with the provider. The provider must ensure that sub-contractors are clear about what is expected of them and, where appropriate, set them targets and objectives.

Providers need to have written agreements with sub-contractors which define:

- those parts of the training process for which the sub-contractor is responsible;
- the timetable for training and assessment;
- targets such as those for retention and achievement rates;
- qualifications and skills the sub-contractor's staff are expected to have;
- records the sub-contractor is required to have (e.g. individual learning plans, records of training sessions etc.);
- the sub-contractor's responsibilities for providing learners with appropriate support;
- health and safety requirements;
- the sub-contractor's responsibility for promoting equal opportunities;
- the sub-contractor's responsibility for carrying

out quality assurance of the services provided and how this relates to the provider's quality assurance processes;

- how often the provider and sub-contractor will meet to discuss learners' progress and matters related to training; and
- financial arrangements, including the fees the sub-contractor will receive and how they will be paid.

### Examples of good practice

Extract from the inspection report of **RWP Training and Development**

*Training given by sub-contractors is closely monitored. Detailed service level agreements state clearly the respective responsibilities of the sub-contractor and RWP's staff and are reviewed each year. Relationships between RWP and the sub-contractor who provides training and assessment in construction are extremely productive. Trainees' views about their programme are obtained. The training and assessment provided by sub-contractors are monitored closely. Regular meetings are held with sub-contractors. The organisation enters into substantial correspondence with sub-contractors on issues related to the monitoring of their provision. The planning and management of training are satisfactory.*

Extract from the inspection report of **Northampton Industrial Training Association Limited (NITAL)**

*The training provided by sub-contractors is closely monitored. Service level agreements clearly state the responsibilities of the sub-contractor and NITAL, and the agreements are reviewed regularly. The views of learners and employers are sought. Regular meetings are held with sub-contractors. There are comprehensive procedures to monitor sub-contractors' performance and improve the learners' experience.*

*The relationship between NITAL and one sub-contractor who provides training and assessment for engineering is extremely productive. This partnership has made a number of successful joint funding bids which have benefited NITAL learners.*

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# Managing resources

## Questions an ALI inspector might ask:

- Are staff appropriately qualified as trainers and assessors?
- What is the ratio of staff to learners?
- Do training centres and workplaces provide appropriate environments for learning?
- Is accommodation well maintained?
- Are premises accessible to those with mobility difficulties?
- Is training equipment up-to-date?
- Are there sufficient learning resources that meet learners' needs?
- Are resources effectively deployed to give value for money?

## Extract from question 7 of the Common Inspection Framework

- *Efficient and effective use is made of resources*

Resources include staff, accommodation, learning materials and equipment. It is essential that providers have good resources, manage them well and deploy them effectively to support learners and help them achieve.

### Staff

Trainers and assessors should have up-to-date knowledge of their occupational area and have appropriate occupational qualifications. They should also be qualified as trainers or assessors. Staff who teach and assess key skills should have been trained to do so.

**Alder Training** - Good practice box from inspection report

*All Alder Training staff are working towards key skills awards and they have also held sessions with employers to explain the key skills.*

Trainers and assessors should have reasonable workloads and these should be reviewed regularly. Trainers and assessors should have enough time and scope to give learners all the support they need. When a member of staff is absent, every effort should be made to ensure that staff who stand in for him or her are able to support continuity of learning.

### Accommodation

Accommodation should provide a suitable environment for learning. It should be sufficiently spacious, well-lit, adequately ventilated and suitably equipped. The best training facilities are likely to resemble the workplace. Off-the-job

training facilities should include large rooms for group work and smaller areas where learners may engage in private study or receive counselling.

Accommodation should be clean, suitably heated and well maintained. It should meet the requirements of health and safety regulations. Regular health and safety checks should be carried out of all training facilities, whether on- or off-the-job. Providers are responsible for ensuring that employers with whom learners are based meet health and safety regulations in the

workplace. Learners should be made aware of the importance of compliance with health and safety regulations.

Accommodation should be easily accessible for disabled learners.

### Equipment

There should be enough appropriate equipment to meet learners' needs. Equipment should be up-to-date and there should be an effective system for replacing outdated equipment.

Equipment should be properly maintained and regularly checked to ensure that it meets health and safety regulations. There should be a system in place for reporting on health and safety. Staff and learners should be properly trained in how to make full use of the equipment available to them and should be provided with protective clothing where appropriate.

### Learning resources

A wide variety of good learning resources should be available to meet the needs of all learners. These materials include computer software, worksheets, project materials, videos, books, magazines, journals and handouts. Learning materials should be up-to-date and appropriate for learners at different levels. They should be reviewed regularly. Materials that are produced in-house should undergo a quality assurance process before they are used. Learning resources should be easily accessible and it may be appropriate to hold them centrally in a learning resources bank.

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### Examples of good practice

**Future-Wize** have a policy for the replacement of training resources. Laptop computers have been purchased for use by learners who do not have access to a computer in the workplace or at home. Trainers take laptop computers to the workplace where they may be used for training purposes or to enable learners to demonstrate their IT skills. Staff are able to use the laptops when they are not required by learners.

A series of workbooks for learners has been developed. All learners receive copies of them. They are clear, concise and easy to follow. The workbooks are relevant to the learner's occupational area. For example, there is a specific workbook for modern apprentices in administration working in a legal environment. Learners also receive a 'guide to evidence' for each NVQ unit that helps them to identify how they can obtain evidence of their NVQ competences through their daily work.

The company has a library of materials that learners may borrow. These include study packs for particular qualifications, IT learning materials, textbooks and journals.

#### Extract from the inspection report of the **Vocational Training and Resource Centre (VTRC) of Jaguar Cars Limited**

*All training staff within VTRC are very well qualified. They all have teaching qualifications, with most having certificates in education. They also have training and development assessor qualifications, and most hold the internal verifier award. Two staff are qualified to assess accreditation of prior learning and others are qualified in basic skills support. The ratio of staff to apprentices is high, with approximately 12 apprentices to each assessor. Apprentices benefit from this high level of support and value the regular contact with their assessor. All assessors have relevant occupational experience, which is updated through regular training in the Jaguar Car manufacturing plant. Staff development is fully supported by VTRC with all training costs paid and time off for study and examinations. The annual staff appraisal system enables staff development needs to be identified. Staff in VTRC are taking a range of courses including key skills, health and safety and higher education qualifications. Short courses and one day training events are offered to all staff on a regular basis.*

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# Equality of opportunity policy

## Questions an ALI inspector might ask:

- Is there a detailed policy for equality of opportunity?
- How is the policy implemented?
- How is the policy promoted amongst staff, learners, sub-contractors and employers?
- How is the effectiveness of the policy monitored?
- Does the provider have the diversity data relating to the area that it serves?

*<sup>1</sup>In September 2002, part 4 of the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act, 2001, will come into force for providers who have more than 15 employees. On 30 May 2002, new legislation under the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000, came into force for a three-year period for a number of public bodies, including the Learning and Skills Council (LSC). The LSC has produced guidance documents on the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act, 2001, and the Race Relations (Amendment) Act, 2000 (please see page 58 for further details).*

## Extract from question 7 of the Common Inspection Framework

It is essential that providers uphold and promote equality of opportunity through all aspects of their work.

Providers must ensure that:

- *There are explicit aims, values and strategies promoting equality that are reflected in the provider's work*
- *There are effective measures to eliminate oppressive behaviour, including all forms of harassment*

Every provider should have a written policy on equal opportunities and this should:

- state the provider's commitment to uphold and promote equal opportunities through all aspects of their work;
- state the provider's commitment to check that all parties involved in training, such as sub-contractors and employers, uphold and promote equal opportunities;
- reflect relevant legislation<sup>1</sup>, such as the Sex Discrimination Act, 1975, the Race Relations Act, 1976, the Disability Discrimination Act, 1995, and the Human Rights Act, 1998;
- provide definitions of terms, such as, "discrimination, victimisation, harassment and bullying";
- state procedures for dealing with complaints, grievances, harassment and bullying;
- define responsibilities of staff for promoting equal opportunities;



- define responsibilities of learners for promoting equal opportunities (some providers produce a special version of their equal opportunities policy for learners which is written in language they can understand); and
- state how the effectiveness of the policy will be monitored.

**Kirklees Youth Training** - Good practice box from inspection report

*Trainees receive a simplified summary of the equal opportunities policy which is written in appropriate language and emphasises the need to treat other trainees fairly. It makes it clear that bullying and harassment will not be tolerated.*

Policies and procedures alone however do not ensure equality of access, treatment, and opportunity for all learners. They must be supported by actions that ensure that all staff and learners, employers and sub-contractors fulfil their responsibilities to promote equality of opportunity.

### Examples of good practice

**Herefordshire Primary Care NHS Trust** promotes equality of opportunity through all aspects of its work by:

- having a comprehensive equal opportunities policy which also covers employers and sub-contractors;
- monitoring the promotion of equal opportunities;
- defining clearly the responsibilities of staff for promoting equal opportunities;
- having effective grievance procedures;
- covering equal opportunities thoroughly during learners' induction;
- using progress reviews to check that learners are being treated fairly;
- collecting and analysing equal opportunities data;
- ensuring that accommodation and facilities are accessible to people with mobility problems; and

- ensuring that learners who need special equipment to help them learn effectively are given it.

The organisation regularly reviews its practices for promoting equal opportunities. Staff maintain record books in which they write up any problems related to equal opportunities or examples of good practice in promoting equal opportunities. They discuss the content of these record books at staff meetings. For example, one member of staff raised as a problem the difficulty of arranging transport to enable a disabled learner to get to the workplace. After discussion, the staff arrived at a solution. The discussion also helped to improve their understanding of issues related to equal opportunities.

**Durham Training Academy's** equal opportunities policy is comprehensive and covers publicity, recruitment, the accessibility of facilities, induction, guidance, training and the content of programmes, assessment and quality assurance. It is complemented by procedures covering harassment, bullying, discipline, drug and alcohol abuse and complaints. Policies are updated to reflect changes in legislation and all parties involved in training are told promptly of these changes.

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# Recruitment of learners and widening participation

## Questions an ALI inspector might ask:

- How do policies for the recruitment and selection of learners promote equality of opportunity?
- What initiatives are in place to recruit learners from under-represented groups?
- Are promotional materials produced in languages spoken in the local community?
- How do promotional materials promote equality of opportunity?
- Do application forms gather information that will assist with monitoring equality of opportunity?
- Are selection criteria clearly stated?
- Have staff been trained in recruitment and selection techniques?

Policies for the recruitment and selection of learners should be clearly written and include guidelines on ways of widening participation. Equality of opportunity can be promoted through the recruitment process by:

- advertising jobs and training programmes in local newspapers for minority groups;
- establishing productive links with minority groups;
- launching special initiatives in local schools to attract more girls to occupational areas traditionally associated with males, such as engineering, and more boys to occupational areas traditionally associated with females, such as care; and
- effective images in publicity materials (e.g. learners who are from minority ethnic groups, female engineers, etc).

**Centrax Ltd** - Good practice box from inspection report

*Female employees who have become supervisors and managers on the shop floor and have taken up positions of responsibility in the technical design and engineering products quality control sections are used as role models in publicity materials to demonstrate that engineering is no longer an exclusively male occupation. Female learners give talks about engineering as a career to girls in local schools.*

If participation is to be widened successfully, it is essential that learners who are recruited are also retained. Facilities must meet the needs of learners from particular groups. For example, accommodation must be accessible to those with problems of mobility and there should be suitable toilet facilities for women at workplaces where traditionally, men have been in the majority.

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**Training for Change** - Good practice box from inspection report

*A questionnaire about disabilities has been most carefully devised. The questions in it are phrased clearly and sensitively. Apprentices respond to the questionnaire well. Those who have a disability declare it and the company is able to provide them with the help and support they need.*

In addition to direct recruitment, some prospective learners are referred to providers by the careers/Connexions service or by employers. Providers should monitor the extent to which under-represented groups are referred to them. If applications from these groups are not received the provider should discuss with the referral agency what action might be taken to encourage them to apply.

**The Essential Support Team Limited (TEST)** - Good practice box from inspection report

*The managing director takes a personal interest in the promotion of equal opportunities. Through close working with the careers service, in an area with a high proportion of minority ethnic young people, he has developed marketing strategies to attract a wider range of people into training. This has involved the translation of marketing materials into a number of different languages and meeting with local community groups. The aim of the meetings has been to find out why young people from different ethnic groups are not becoming apprentices with **TEST** and to find ways to encourage them to participate. All **TEST** staff have benefited from the managing director's improved understanding of the subject.*

Providers should have clear criteria ensuring that the selection of staff and learners is carried out fairly and objectively. Staff involved in selection should have appropriate training.

### Examples of good practice

Through its management information system, **QUEST** collects and analyses data on the gender, ethnicity and disabilities of learners it recruits. For example, the proportion of learners from minority ethnic groups, or with disabilities, is compared with the proportion of people from such groups in the local community. Two years ago, **QUEST** recognised that learners from minority ethnic groups were under-represented on modern apprenticeship programmes.

An initiative was launched to encourage employers in certain areas to offer employment and training to persons from ethnic minority groups. **QUEST** also promotes its training programmes in shopping centres in those areas where the proportion of people from minority ethnic groups is high. The number of learners from minority ethnic groups has increased and one third of learners on advanced modern apprenticeship programmes are now from minority ethnic groups.

**Herefordshire Primary Care NHS Trust** provides suitable accommodation and facilities for staff and learners who have physical disabilities. The training centre is accessible to wheelchair users and it has toilet facilities for the disabled. The Trust has recently purchased a minibus for transporting disabled persons and where necessary, provides taxis for them. It also makes use of the transport services of local voluntary organisations, such as Wheels to Work, a local charity that supplies mopeds and Dial-a-Bike which supplies bicycles. One learner with severely restricted mobility has been provided with a specially modified car.

The Employment Services' disability team provides advice and guidance on assessment and REMPLOY provides employer subsidies, mentoring and advice.

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# Equality of opportunity: Raising awareness

## Questions an ALI inspector might ask:

- Do managers and staff give priority to the promotion of equality of opportunity and understand the issues involved?
- Is there a structured training programme for staff on equality of opportunity?
- Are managers and staff clear about their responsibility to promote equality of opportunity?
- Is equal opportunities training part of the induction process for learners?
- How is learners' understanding of equality of opportunity issues assessed?
- Is learners' understanding of equality of opportunity checked during their training programme?
- Do learners know what to do if they encounter discrimination, harassment, victimisation or bullying?
- How are complaints dealt with?
- How do employers and sub-contractors promote equality of opportunity?
- How is promotion of equality of opportunity by employers and sub-contractors monitored?

## Managers and Staff

If a provider is to uphold and promote equality of opportunity effectively, it is important that:

- all staff receive training on equality of opportunity;
- new staff receive training on the organisation's equality of opportunity policy. This also provides an opportunity to identify whether additional training is needed;
- all job descriptions define the responsibilities of staff for promoting equality of opportunity; and
- checks are made regularly on the wording and images in publicity and learning materials to ensure these promote equality of opportunity.

Equality of opportunity is not about treating everyone in the same way but about providing support appropriate to individual needs.

## Learners

The principles of equality of opportunity and the organisation's policy should be explained to learners clearly during their induction. Learners need to know what they should do if they encounter discrimination, harassment, victimisation and bullying. They should understand the complaints and grievance procedures. They also need to be fully aware of what constitutes unacceptable behaviour and what the consequences of such behaviour are.

Training for learners on equality of opportunity can involve:

- use of appropriate videos;
- presentations from outside speakers;
- handouts on equal opportunities;

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- checking learners' understanding of equality of opportunity during progress reviews;
- use of questionnaires on equality of opportunity;
- quizzes about equality of opportunity;
- role-play exercises; and
- regular checks on learners' understanding of equality of opportunity throughout their training programmes.

**Aston Training Centre (ATC)** - Good practice box from inspection report

*There is good practice to ensure that learners understand equality of opportunity and that they are receiving fair and equal treatment. The progress review form includes a section to record questions asked and answers given by the apprentice. ATC staff have met to discuss and agree on appropriate questions to ask on equality of opportunity. Questions cover treatment received by apprentices, pay and conditions at work, and knowledge and understanding of policies and procedures. This ensures that the task of asking questions is not repetitive, with the same questions being repeatedly asked of apprentices.*

**The Enham Trust** - Good practice box from inspection report

*To encourage trainees to take action if they encounter bullying or harassment, there is a well-publicised network of harassment advisers. The names and location of these advisers appears on notice boards. The notice states that complaints will be taken seriously and that the adviser will guide the trainee through the necessary procedure in order to reach a successful conclusion.*

### **Employers and sub-contractors**

Providers are responsible for ensuring that employers and sub-contractors with whom learners are placed uphold and promote equality of opportunity. Some providers do this effectively through the use of appropriate questionnaires. Many providers help employers develop their own equality of opportunity policy or provide training on equality of opportunity for their employees.

### Example of good practice

**Durham Training Academy (DTA)** aims to provide all learners with a thorough understanding of issues related to equality of opportunity. During their induction, learners watch a video called *Working Together* produced by the former Tyneside Training and Enterprise Council (TEC), which shows discriminatory behaviour. After watching the video, the learners discuss what they have seen and confront some issues they may not have considered in detail before. During their induction, learners also test their understanding by completing a workbook.

Throughout their training programme, the importance of upholding equality is emphasised continually. Learners are asked to consider how they might wash a disabled person's hair, how to avoid treating disabled persons patronisingly, how facilities can be made accessible to disabled persons and what special equipment disabled persons might need. DTA has formed a partnership with a local special school. Learners visit the

school regularly to do the pupils' hair and the pupils visit DTA's salon regularly. This partnership has proved most rewarding for all concerned and has helped learners to increase their understanding of the needs of persons with physical disabilities and learning difficulties.

Visiting speakers from community organisations give presentations during the training programmes. For example, an employee of the local racial equality council of African-Caribbean origin has talked to learners about his own experience of discrimination. Minority ethnic groups make up a very small proportion of the population in the local Durham area and learners may have little awareness of the impact of discrimination.

Staff at DTA believe that learners who develop a thorough understanding of equality of opportunity issues are able to respond effectively to the needs of salon customers from different community groups. This ability will provide important business benefits for them or their employers in the future.

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# Monitoring equality of opportunity

## Questions an ALI inspector might ask:

- Is equality of opportunity data collected?
- How is the data analysed?
- How is the data used to monitor the effectiveness of the promotion of equality of opportunity?
- Does the analysis of the data reveal that learners from particular groups perform better than learners from other groups?
- How are weaknesses in the promotion of equality of opportunity addressed?
- How is promotion of equality of opportunity by employers and sub-contractors monitored?

Providers should collect data during the recruitment process on the gender, ethnicity and disabilities of their learners. The LSC Individualised Learner Record (ILR) requires providers to collect data on learners' ethnicity. Further information on the ILR is available on the LSC website.

Providers should aim to ensure that the proportion of learners from particular groups, such as minority ethnic groups, is similar to the proportion of people from such groups in the local community. Information on the profile of the local community can usually be obtained from local libraries or the local LSC. If providers find that some groups are under-represented on training programmes, they should take appropriate action to attract more learners from those groups.

Data on retention and achievement rates, and the proportion of learners who progress to further training or employment, should be analysed to find out whether learners from some particular groups perform better than those from others. If learners from some groups consistently perform less well than those from others, appropriate action should be taken to help them do better. For example, it may be that learners in some groups need more support than those in others.

Providers should have effective arrangements for monitoring promotion of equal opportunities in the workplace, and by sub-contractors. Such monitoring can be carried out through:

- discussion with employers or sub-contractors;
- observation in the workplace;
- discussion with learners during their progress reviews; and
- obtaining feedback from learners.



Problems and issues identified through monitoring must be discussed immediately with the employer or sub-contractor concerned.

### Examples of good practice

**Herefordshire Primary Care NHS Trust** collects data on the gender, ethnicity, disabilities, health problems, marital status and age of each prospective learner. This information is not available to the selection panel. The data is subject to thorough analysis. The findings of this analysis are discussed during staff meetings. An annual report is produced on recruitment in which groups under-represented on training programmes are identified.

**MEAT East Anglia Trades (Ipswich) Ltd** collects data on prospective learners' gender, ethnicity and disabilities. The data is analysed to identify groups under-represented on training programmes. The organisation has launched initiatives to encourage local employers to employ learners from groups under-represented in the industry. Staff from the organisation have helped employers to write job advertisements. They have formed close

relationships with local voluntary organisations to promote training to minority groups. The meat and poultry industry has traditionally employed far more men than women. At the time of the inspection, 21% of learners were female.

Furthermore, 6% of learners were from minority ethnic groups, whereas the proportion of persons from such groups in the local community was only 2.5%. The company has used its own staff as role models for the industry as 40% are from minority ethnic groups and 70% are female.

The company has been sensitive to the cultural needs of learners from particular groups. For example, it provides prayer facilities for learners and employees and provides training on Sunday for those for whom this day has no religious significance.

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# Quality assurance strategy and systems

## Questions an ALI inspector might ask:

- Is there a quality assurance system that covers all aspects of training?
- Are quality assurance procedures clearly documented?
- How does the provider check the effectiveness of the quality assurance procedures?
- Are there internal audits of compliance with the procedures?
- What other steps are taken to monitor the quality of the learner's experience?
- How does the provider address weaknesses identified through the quality assurance system?

## Extract from question 7 of the Common Inspection Framework

- How effectively, through quality assurance and self assessment, performance is monitored and evaluated and steps taken to secure improvement
- The quality assurance arrangements are systematic and informed by the views of all interested parties
- Staff understand and are fully involved in the organisation's quality assurance arrangements

The purpose of quality assurance systems and procedures is to ensure that the quality of training learners receive is never less than satisfactory, and to identify ways in which improvements can be made. Every aspect of training should be subject to quality assurance.

A quality assurance system should have written procedures for key tasks which affect the learning process. They should be clearly written and identify who is responsible for each action. Procedures should be updated as improvements are made.

## Vocational Training and Resource Centre of Jaguar Cars Ltd - Good practice box from inspection report

*Quality assurance documents are tightly controlled. All staff receive a numbered copy of the quality assurance procedure manual and have to sign a register confirming that they have received it. The centre supervisor acts as quality assurance co-ordinator and is solely responsible for changes to the procedure manual. By consulting the records he is able to ensure each copy is updated and staff are aware of changes.*

Providers should have an effective process for checking that quality assurance procedures are carried out properly. Checks should be made by a member of staff who is not directly involved in the action being checked. Particular emphasis should be placed on those actions which are most important in the learning process.

Procedures alone will not improve quality. A quality assurance system must also provide a check on how other aspects of the training process that directly affect the learner's experience are carried out. This can be done through:

- observation of training;
- collection of feedback from learners;
- self-assessment;
- development planning; and
- internal verification.

### Examples of good practice

**Durham Training Academy (DTA)** has clearly written quality assurance procedures that are easy for all staff to follow. The procedures cover all aspects of the training process, including:

- monitoring of the quality assurance system;
- selection and recruitment of staff;
- induction of staff;
- selection and recruitment of learners;
- induction of learners;
- initial assessment and accreditation of prior learning;
- individual learning plans;
- on-the-job training;
- off-the-job training;
- internal reviews of learners' progress;
- assessment and verification;
- exit procedures for learners; and
- documentation control.

The quality assurance procedures are set out clearly in a well-written manual. Employers and all members of staff are given a copy of the manual. Staff are given training on how to implement the quality assurance procedures. DTA has internal audit arrangements to check that the systems are operating effectively. Two members of staff have been trained as internal auditors. Procedures may be improved following the outcomes of an internal audit. New procedures are then issued to all staff and employers.

**A and R Training Services** has clear quality assurance procedures that cover training. The quality assurance process is monitored to check that all staff comply with the procedures and to identify ways of improving them. The procedures typically involve:

- collection and analysis of feedback from learners and employers;
- observation of training sessions;
- evaluation of the recruitment and selection of learners;
- interviews with learners;
- observation of reviews of learners' progress;
- analysis of learners' records; and
- examination of documentation.

A report is produced which gives recommendations on ways of improving provision. The report specifies who is responsible for carrying out each action and the date by which it must be completed. All staff and sub-contractors receive a copy of the report. The findings of the report are drawn upon in the self-assessment process.

# Self-assessment and development planning

## Questions an AI inspector might ask:

- How does self-assessment relate to business planning processes and quality assurance?
- How are all staff involved in self-assessment?
- How are the views of learners, employers and sub-contractors taken into account during the self-assessment process?
- To what extent does self-assessment focus upon the experiences and achievements of all learners?
- Are judgements accurate and supported by appropriate evidence?
- How does the development plan address all the key issues identified in the self-assessment report?
- Are the proposed actions likely to be sufficient to bring about the desired changes?
- How is progress in implementing the development plan monitored?

## Extract from question 7 of the Common Inspection Framework

- How effectively, through quality assurance and self-assessment, performance is monitored and evaluated and steps taken to secure improvement
- Rigorous self-assessment leads to identified priorities and challenging targets for improvement

The self-assessment process enables providers to identify strengths to be built upon, and weaknesses to be rectified. Self-assessment can provide the basis for a provider's quality assurance system. It can be an integral part of other quality assurance processes such as those required for the Investors in People award, the ISO 9000 series and the Business Excellence Model of the European Foundation for Quality Management. Self-assessment is a key part of the business planning cycle:



It is important that all staff participate in the self-assessment process. Staff who are not involved in self-assessment are less likely to be motivated to act on the findings and therefore make the necessary improvements.

Effective self-assessment also takes account of the views of learners, employees, sub-contractors, employers and all parties involved in training.

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Staff need to make accurate judgements and be open and honest in their identification of strengths and weaknesses. Self-assessment reports should do more than just describe the current position; they should contain judgements about the quality of provision. Judgements should be based on clear evidence and accurate information. Ideally, there should be agreement between inspection and self-assessment findings.

It is helpful if self-assessment reports follow the same format as inspection reports. It is then easier to compare the findings of each.

Self-assessment reports should lead to development plans that build on strengths and rectify weaknesses identified through the self-assessment process. Development plans should have clear objectives and targets. They should state who has responsibility for implementing each action and the deadline for completing it. Progress in implementing development plans should be monitored carefully and action taken if progress is inadequate.

Sources of further information on self-assessment and development planning are listed on page 58.

### Examples of good practice

**MEAT East Anglia Trades (Ipswich) Ltd** has undertaken self-assessment on a regular basis since 1998 and it is now an integral part of the company's quality assurance process.

All staff were briefed about the self-assessment process and were actively involved in it. They agreed the strengths and weaknesses identified through self-assessment. The views of learners, employers and other parties involved in training were gathered through discussion and the use of questionnaires. The company has drawn up a detailed development plan that shows how strengths will be built upon and how weaknesses will be rectified. The plan specifies where responsibility for action lies and the timescales within which action must be carried out. Progress in implementing the plan is reviewed at each staff meeting.

Inspectors agreed with most of the grades, strengths and weaknesses given in the self-assessment report.

### Extract from the inspection report of **Herefordshire Primary Care NHS Trust**

*Self-assessment is an integral part of the training centre's quality assurance strategy and is the main process for continuous improvement within the organisation. The improvement of retention and achievement rates is the main benchmark for success. The latest self-assessment report was prepared in December 2000. It provides an accurate description and evaluation of the organisation and many of the weaknesses which it identifies have been satisfactorily resolved. Inspectors agreed with most of the remaining weaknesses and identified many strengths not shown in the self-assessment report. All staff are involved in the self-assessment process, which is thorough and leads to detailed action plans. There are self-assessment review and evaluation meetings every three months. The self-assessment action plan is monitored each week at the departmental staff meetings and is effective in leading to continuous improvements. For example, using work-based assessors in care programmes was not effective, so the training centre reverted to using its own assessors. They also increased support for employers, including detailed information packs for workplace supervisors.*

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# Collecting and using feedback

## Questions an ALI inspector might ask:

- Is feedback collected regularly from learners, employers, sub-contractors and other key partners?
- How is feedback analysed?
- What changes are made as a result of analysing feedback?

## Extract from question 7 of the Common Inspection Framework

- *The quality assurance arrangements are systematic and informed by the views of all interested parties*

The views of learners, employers, sub-contractors and all parties involved in training can be helpful when identifying ways of improving provision. Feedback can be obtained through:

- questionnaires;
- interviews (including telephone interviews);
- focus groups; and
- suggestion boxes.

Questionnaires are an effective means of gathering views from a large number of learners but it may be hard to get a representative response from a high proportion of those surveyed. Some providers offer learners some incentive to provide their views, such as the chance to win a prize in a raffle if they answer and return a questionnaire.

Other providers have found that learners are more likely to answer questionnaires if they are handed to them personally and they are given time, during their progress reviews for example, to write their responses. However, results obtained in this way can have a positive bias because the answers can be attributed to an individual.

Questionnaires should be written in simple language. It is helpful to pilot questionnaires with a small group first to check that questions are not open to misinterpretation.

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Some providers have found they obtain more feedback from employers and sub-contractors by interviewing them rather than giving them questionnaires. However, this process is more time consuming and means that the number of people interviewed will be smaller than the number surveyed. Telephone interviews take less time than face-to-face interviews.

**A and R Training Services Ltd** - Good practice box from inspection report

*Two files are maintained in the company's offices so that staff can note any problems for managers. One file is for equal opportunities and the other is for training. They are used for suggestions from staff members, or to record comments from employers or learners that would not be picked up by the formal feedback systems. The files are regularly referred to by managers and are used in the self-assessment process.*

Feedback should be gathered regularly, analysed promptly and summarised effectively. Respondents should be given a summary of their views and details of any action to be taken as a result.

**Barnsley District General Hospital NHS Trust**

- Good practice box from inspection report

*At the end of each off-the-job training session in business administration, the trainees are asked to evaluate the session. They discuss the strengths and weaknesses of the session with their trainer. Ways of improving training are noted.*



### Examples of good practice

**MEAT East Anglia Trades (Ipswich) Ltd** asks learners to reply to questionnaires that are distributed during the training programme. They are asked to grade the quality of the:

- training they are given;
- performance of their trainers and assessors;
- support they receive; and
- learning facilities and resources.

Feedback is sought from employers in a number of ways including interviews and questionnaires. Their opinions are sought on a range of issues including how the company can be improved, how relevant off-the-job training is to on-the-job training and the extent to which learners' performance has improved as a result of training.

Feedback is acted upon. For example, action has been taken in the light of feedback to:

- provide a laptop computer for learners to use in the workplace;
- update some learning materials; and
- keep employers better informed about learners' progress and NVQ requirements.

Learners at **James Beattie Plc** are asked for feedback about the effectiveness of their training at different stages of their programme. Each store also has a programme review team made up of learner representatives, training and personnel staff

and representatives from the local LSC and in some cases careers services. These meetings are held quarterly. Learners value the programme review team process highly and can identify improvements brought about through it. For example the timing of the outdoor development residential which all learners attend has been changed as a result of learner feedback.

Assessors also complete regular evaluations that cover the structure and effectiveness of the overall programme. They look at the impact the programme has had on learners and the ways in which the training programme has benefited the business, as well as the teaching of the programme.

Evaluation of training is thorough. All findings are analysed carefully, reported to managers and where appropriate acted upon. This leads to constant updating and improvement of the programme.

#### Extract from the inspection report of the **Vocational Training and Resource Centre (VTRC) of Jaguar Cars Limited**

*Management information is gathered from a range of feedback questionnaires and used to bring about continuous improvement. Questionnaires are issued to apprentices annually during their training and also when they finish their training. Employers and VTRC training staff also complete annual questionnaires. There is a high response rate to the questionnaires. The feedback is analysed and there are several examples of this information being used to improve the training. These include the opportunity for apprentices to take part in the monthly staff meetings and the health and safety and equal opportunities working groups, after feedback showed that apprentices felt they did not have enough influence over their training programme. Analysis of feedback from employers showed that they wanted more information about the training. The employer handbook was devised and introduced in response. Staff feedback resulted in improvements to the quality assurance of assessment.*

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# Internal verification

## Questions an ALI inspector might ask:

- How is internal verification planned?
- Does internal verification take place throughout the training programme as opposed to when the learner is at the end?
- What are the arrangements for sampling assessments?
- Does internal verification include the observation of assessments as well as examination of learners' portfolios?
- How are records of internal verification maintained?
- Do internal verifiers have appropriate qualifications and occupational experience?
- How do internal verifiers provide feedback to assessors?
- How is good practice in assessment shared?
- How is feedback from external verifiers acted upon?

Although there is no specific reference to internal verification under question 7 in the *Common Inspection Framework*, it is a key activity for ensuring that learners' achievements are valid. Internal verifiers are responsible for ensuring that assessments are fair and that they are carried out in accordance with the requirements of the relevant awarding body.

Internal verifiers must:

- hold an appropriate qualification in internal verification;
- be occupationally competent<sup>1</sup> in the area in which they work; and
- must not verify assessments they have carried out themselves.

Normally, a sample of assessments is verified. The sampling of assessments should be subject to a written plan. This should show clearly the range of NVQ units to which the assessments relate. It is not necessary to verify assessments for every NVQ unit completed by an individual candidate, provided that the sample covers assessment for all the units of a particular NVQ.

Internal verification involves:

- examination of learners' work;
- observation of assessments being carried out;
- questioning of candidates about their work; and
- questioning of assessors about their judgements.

Internal verification should take place throughout the training programme and not just at the end of it. If internal verification is left until near the end of the candidate's period of training, the verifier may find errors in assessment that mean that the candidate may have to collect further evidence of his or her competence relating to tasks completed some time

<sup>1</sup>Details of the occupational competences internal verifiers should possess are available from the relevant sector skills councils, national training organisations (NTOs) and awarding bodies.

ago. In addition, the candidate may have difficulty producing the evidence required in the time left on the programme.

It is also the responsibility of the internal verifiers to give advice and support to assessors. Internal verifiers should organise regular meetings of assessors in order to standardise assessment judgements and identify and share good practice.

Internal verifiers must keep records of verification carried out and these will be scrutinised by external verifiers from the awarding body concerned. The records should include details of the candidates whose assessments have been verified, the NVQ units to which the assessments relate, and the dates upon which verification was carried out.

### Examples of good practice

Extract from the inspection report of **QUEST**

*Learners' assessment is well planned and well structured in all occupational areas. Internal verification is rigorous and helps to ensure that assessment decisions are reliable and consistent. The internal verification policy and supporting procedures cover observation of assessors, observation of training sessions, sampling portfolios and feedback to assessors. There is a monthly sampling exercise to check both assessment and the progress of learners, and there are procedures for resolving any issues raised and for monitoring any actions taken. Internal verifiers support and advise trainers and assessors. Staff discuss external verifiers' reports and take appropriate action to put into practice the recommendations which are made.*

**Future-Wize Limited** has good arrangements for the internal verification of assessments. Assessors complete a 'request for internal verification' form as soon as candidates have completed NVQ units. Details about the assessors, the candidate, the units, dates of assessment and feedback from the verifier to the assessors are all entered on this form.

The written feedback which internal verifiers give assessors is constructive and helpful. It includes comments on the assessment methods as well as the assessors' judgements.

Following a visit by the external verifier a memo is issued which includes:

- issues arising from the external verifier's feedback;
- an action plan to correct any weaknesses identified which states who is responsible for implementing each action; and
- the date of the next visit.

A meeting is arranged to ensure that assessors understand what changes they need to make.

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# Continuous improvement

## Questions an ALI inspector might ask:

- Is there a system for observing training sessions?
- What criteria are used to judge the effectiveness of training sessions?
- Do trainers who are observed receive feedback on their performance?
- What improvements have been made as a result of such feedback?
- Have staff been trained to observe training and learning?
- What benchmarking activities have been carried out?
- What changes have been made as a result of benchmarking activities?
- Are trends in performance analysed to ensure continuous improvement?

Other arrangements that providers can use to continuously improve their performance include benchmarking, performance trend analysis and observation of training and learning. These can all provide evidence for self-assessment.

## Benchmarking

Benchmarking involves making comparisons with similar organisations, usually those that are regarded as among the best in their field, and, where appropriate, adopting their practices to make improvements. Some benchmarking is quantitative, for example, comparing achievement or retention rates to find out what factors enable other providers to have higher rates. Other benchmarking may be qualitative, for example comparing initial assessment processes or learning packs provided during induction. There are five steps in the benchmarking process:

- Identifying what to benchmark – what it is that the provider wants to improve;
- Choosing a provider against which to benchmark – this may involve asking the local LSC for suggestions or selecting providers whose inspection reports identify strengths in relevant areas;
- Deciding how to carry out the benchmarking – this might involve visits to other providers, interviews with their staff, case studies etc;
- Analysing the information gathered – identifying the factors that enable other providers to perform better;
- Using the information obtained – introducing changes to improve provision and monitoring their effectiveness.

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### Observation of training and learning

In question 2 in the *Common Inspection Framework* providers are asked to make judgements about the effectiveness of training and learning. More and more providers are carrying out structured observation of training, learning and assessment in preparation for inspection. Inspectors spend a considerable amount of time observing training and learning during an inspection. Training often takes place behind closed doors and only the trainer and learner know what actually happens. Providers should ensure that training is observed and evaluated effectively. For observation to be effective, observers must:

- Have clear criteria for judging the effectiveness of training and learning – for example, have learners' needs been identified, have objectives been set and achieved, did the trainer use appropriate training methods?
- Ensure that the member of staff being observed understands the purpose and scope of the observation and how and when it will take place.
- Have appropriate training in observation.
- Provide feedback as soon as possible after the session in order that its impact is not lost. This should include praising good practice and suggesting ways in which improvements might be made.

For improvements to take place, trainers must implement the recommendations made by observers.

### Trends in performance

Most providers monitor retention and learners' achievement rates, the proportion of learners who complete their programmes and the proportions who progress to further learning or employment.

Trends may be identified over a specific period, usually at least three years. If any aspect of performance appears to be declining, the reasons for the decline should be established and appropriate action taken. Analysis of trends can be very important, particularly where it is hard to identify similar providers against which to benchmark.

### Examples of good practice

**Visage School of Beauty Therapy Limited** has an established system of observation of training. Managers are responsible for observing trainers in the training school. A timetable is issued which identifies which sessions will be observed and when. Clear criteria have been developed for evaluating the effectiveness of training which relate to:

- preparation for the training session;
- the use of learning resources;
- the extent to which learners are engaged in training activities; and
- the way in which learners' understanding is checked.

Trainers are given feedback after each observation. An action plan to improve performance is agreed and written up. Where development needs are identified, arrangements are made for appropriate training. The findings from observation of training sessions are discussed openly at staff meetings in order to promote the sharing of good practice.

# Checklist for the self-assessment of leadership and management

This checklist is intended to help providers carry out self-assessment of their own leadership and management. Providers are asked to consider *how well* they carry out each leadership and management activity and then award themselves a score, using the following scale of 1 – 4.

1 – We do this very well

3 – We need to improve what we do and know how to go about it

2 – We do this quite well

4 – We need to improve what we do, but do not really know how to go about it

**Make sure you have the evidence to back up your assessment.**

	1	2	3	4
<b>1. Strategic and business planning</b>				
<i>How well do you .....</i>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• carry out strategic planning?</li> <li>• ensure that your strategic plan reflects the organisation's values and vision for the future and sets out clear objectives and strategies for achieving them?</li> <li>• ensure your plan focuses on ways of improving learners' experience and raising the level of their achievement?</li> <li>• involve supervisory boards in determining strategy and setting direction?</li> <li>• produce a detailed annual business plan?</li> <li>• set out clear objectives and targets in the business plan?</li> <li>• involve staff in both strategic and business planning?</li> <li>• share plans with employers, sub-contractors and key partners involved with the training process?</li> </ul>				

## 2. Target-setting

*How well do you .....*

- set SMART targets for all staff and learners?
- set targets for retention and achievement rates and the proportion of learners progressing to further training or employment?
- involve staff and learners in determining targets?
- use accurate information when setting targets?
- monitor and record progress towards achieving targets?
- take appropriate action if targets are not met?
- celebrate success in achieving targets?

## 3. Management information systems

*How well do you .....*

- maintain a central system of data on learners?
- keep this up-to-date?
- regularly analyse data?
- analyse data on rates of retention and achievement and the proportion of learners progressing to further training or employment?
- use data to monitor the progress of learners and to support decision making?

## 4. Communication

*How well do you .....*

- ensure that staff have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities and how these relate to those of colleagues?
- ensure that staff are kept fully informed of company objectives, targets, policies, procedures, required standards of performance and any proposed changes which may affect their work?
- provide opportunities for staff to discuss issues, learners' progress and performance, and to share and exchange ideas and good practice?
- maintain minutes of meetings which identify clear action points and state who has responsibility for their implementation?
- maintain regular contact with external partners, including sub-contractors and employers?
- ensure that external organisations are kept informed of any developments which impact upon the learner's learning experience?
- produce written agreements which set out the respective responsibilities of sub-contractors and employers?

## 5. Human resource management

### How well do you .....

- ensure that there are adequate arrangements for staff recruitment and selection, induction, performance appraisal and staff training and development?
- set out these arrangements in writing?
- ensure that these arrangements are implemented?
- evaluate the impact of these arrangements on the quality of provision?

## 6. Managing sub-contractors

### How well do you .....

- set out formal agreements with sub-contractors that describe their roles and responsibilities?
- maintain regular communication with sub-contractors?
- monitor the performance of sub-contractors against agreed targets?
- ensure that your quality assurance arrangements extend to sub-contractors?
- develop action plans to address weaknesses identified in sub-contractors' provision?
- involve sub-contractors in self-assessment and development planning activities?
- ensure that the sub-contractors provide equality of opportunity?
- ensure that the sub-contractors comply with relevant equality of opportunity legislation?

## 7. Managing resources

### How well do you .....

- ensure that staff are appropriately qualified as trainers and assessors?
- ensure that the ratio of staff to learners is sufficient to give learners the support they need?
- ensure that training centres and workplaces provide environments in which learners can learn effectively?
- ensure that your premises are well maintained and meet health and safety requirements?
- ensure that premises are accessible for those with mobility difficulties?
- ensure that training equipment is up-to-date and meets health and safety requirements?
- ensure that learning resources meet learners' needs?
- ensure that there are sufficient learning resources available?
- ensure that resources are effectively deployed to give value for money?



## 8. Equality of opportunity policy

*How well do you .....*

- promote equal opportunities through all aspects of provision?
- ensure that learning is inclusive?
- produce a detailed equal opportunities policy?
- provide a clear strategy for the implementation of the policy?
- promote the policy amongst staff, learners, sub-contractors and employers?
- ensure that the effectiveness of the policy is monitored?
- establish the proportion of people from minority groups in the community that you serve?

## 9. Recruitment and widening participation

*How well do you .....*

- promote equality of opportunity?
- undertake activities to widen the participation of under-represented groups?
- set targets for the recruitment of under-represented groups?
- produce promotional materials that reflect the diversity of the local community and avoid the reinforcement of stereotypical employment and training choices?
- produce promotional materials in languages other than English where the local community dictates?
- gather information from application forms to assist with equal opportunities monitoring?
- identify learner selection criteria?
- train staff in recruitment and selection techniques?

## 10. Equality of opportunity: Raising awareness

*How well do you .....*

- ensure that managers and staff have a good understanding of equal opportunities issues?
- provide structured training to raise awareness of equal opportunities issues?
- ensure that managers and staff are clear about their responsibilities in relation to the promotion of equal opportunities?
- ensure that learners receive equal opportunities training during their induction and programme?
- check that learners have a good understanding of equal opportunities issues?
- make learners aware of what to do if they are subject to discrimination, harassment, victimisation or bullying?
- deal with complaints and follow them up?
- promote equal opportunities to employers and sub-contractors?
- ensure that employers and sub-contractors have a good understanding of equal opportunities issues?

	1	2	3	4
<b>11. Monitoring equality of opportunity</b>				
<p><i>How well do you .....</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• collect equal opportunities data?</li> <li>• regularly analyse equal opportunities data?</li> <li>• use the analysed information to assess how well equality of opportunity is promoted and the effectiveness of your equal opportunities policy and practices?</li> <li>• identify any significant differences between groups in relation to recruitment, retention, progression and achievement?</li> <li>• take action as a result of any key differences identified?</li> <li>• monitor employers' and sub-contractors' promotion of equal opportunities?</li> </ul>				

<b>12. Quality assurance strategy and systems</b>				
<p><i>How well do you .....</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ensure that your quality assurance system covers all aspects of training?</li> <li>• document quality assurance procedures?</li> <li>• ensure that quality assurance procedures are carried out?</li> <li>• monitor the effectiveness of quality assurance in improving the standard of training?</li> <li>• use other techniques to raise quality?</li> </ul>				

<b>13. Self-assessment and development planning</b>				
<p><i>How well do you .....</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ensure that self-assessment is linked to the business planning process and other quality assurance mechanisms?</li> <li>• involve staff at all levels in the self-assessment?</li> <li>• take account of the views of learners, employers and sub-contractors during the self-assessment process?</li> <li>• focus upon the experience and achievements of learners through self-assessment?</li> <li>• make accurate judgements and substantiate them with appropriate evidence?</li> <li>• address all of the key issues identified in the self-assessment in the development plan?</li> <li>• ensure that actions will bring about the desired changes?</li> <li>• regularly monitor and update progress against the development plan?</li> </ul>				

<b>14. Collecting and using feedback</b>				
<p><i>How well do you .....</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• obtain feedback regularly from learners, employers, sub-contractors and any other key partners?</li> <li>• analyse feedback to identify where improvements to provision are needed?</li> <li>• bring about change as a result of feedback analysis?</li> </ul>				

## 15. Internal verification

*How well do you .....*

- meet awarding body requirements for assessment and verification?
- plan internal verification?
- carry out internal verification at regular intervals during the training programme?
- use systematic sampling procedures, which are understood by trainers and assessors?
- include the observation of assessments in addition to the examination of learners' portfolios during internal verification?
- maintain records of internal verification?
- ensure that internal verifiers have appropriate qualifications and occupational competences in those areas for which they are responsible?
- ensure that internal verifiers provide feedback to assessors and share good practice?
- ensure that recommendations of external verifiers are implemented promptly?

## 16. Other continuous improvement arrangements

*How well do you .....*

- carry out observations of training and learning sessions?
- use identified criteria to judge the standard and effectiveness of training and learning sessions?
- give feedback following observation activities?
- make improvements as a result of feedback on observation?
- ensure that staff have been appropriately trained to carry out observation?
- undertake benchmarking activities with similar organisations?
- make changes as a result of benchmarking activities?
- analyse trends in performance over time to identify where improvements in provision are needed?

# Additional sources of information

## Publications

- The *Common Inspection Framework for Inspecting Post-16 Education and Training* published by the Adult Learning Inspectorate (ALI) and Office for Standards in Education (OFSTED), 2001.
- *Circular 02/03 Data Collection: Collection arrangements on learner data*, Learning and Skills Council, 2002.
- *Equality in Practice: A guide to mainstreaming*, Learning and Skills Council, 2001.
- *Equality and Diversity Guidance 03/2002: Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000*, Learning and Skills Council, 2002.
- *Equality and Diversity Guidance 02/2002: The Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001*, Learning and Skills Council, 2002.
- *Equality and Diversity in Adult and Community Learning: A guide for managers*, LSDA and NIACE, 2002
- *Guidance for providers on the inspection of work-based learning: Interpreting the Common Inspection Framework*, ALI, 2002.
- *Learning and Skills Council Strategic Framework to 2004 – Corporate Plan*, Learning and Skills Council, 2001.
- *Making the grade: A report on standards in work-based learning for young people*, LSDA, 2002.
- *Observation of teaching and learning in adult education*, LSDA and NIACE, 2001
- *Raising Standards: Guidance on self-assessment and development planning*, Department for Education and Skills, 2001.
- *A Guide for Providers on Self-assessment and Development Planning*, Learning and Skills Council, 2001.
- *Targets: Getting smarter*, Learning and Skills Council, 2002.

## Websites

**Adult Learning Inspectorate**  
[www.ali.gov.uk](http://www.ali.gov.uk)

**Department for Education and Skills**  
[www.dfes.gov.uk](http://www.dfes.gov.uk)

**Learning and Skills Council**  
[www.lsc.gov.uk](http://www.lsc.gov.uk)

**Learning and Skills Development Agency**  
[www.lsd.gov.uk](http://www.lsd.gov.uk)

**The National Institute of Adult Continuing Education**  
[www.niace.org.uk](http://www.niace.org.uk)

**Office for Standards in Education**  
[www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

# Acknowledgements

This report was written by Lynne Clough on behalf of the Learning and Skills Council. Fieldwork assistance was provided by Alison Foster.

Many thanks to all those individuals and organisations that have helped in the development of this guide. This includes work-based learning providers who have helped with the development of case studies and/or commented on draft text, staff from local Learning and Skills Councils, and staff in the LSC National Office and the Adult Learning Inspectorate.

# Notes



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Publication enquiries: 0870 900 6800

Reference MISC/0223/02