

INSPECTION REPORT

KD Training Solutions

08 June 2006



ADULT LEARNING
INSPECTORATE

Adult Learning Inspectorate

The Adult Learning Inspectorate (ALI) was established under the provisions of the *Learning and Skills Act 2000* to bring the inspection of all aspects of adult learning and work-based learning within the remit of a single inspectorate. The ALI is responsible for inspecting a wide range of government-funded learning, including:

- work-based learning for all people aged over 16
- provision in further education colleges for people aged 19 and over
- **learnirect** provision
- Adult and Community Learning
- training funded by Jobcentre Plus
- education and training in prisons, at the invitation of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Prisons
- adult information, advice and guidance services (**nextstep**).

Inspections are carried out in accordance with the Common Inspection Framework by teams of full-time inspectors and part-time associate inspectors who have knowledge of, and experience in, the work which they inspect. All providers are invited to nominate a senior member of their staff to participate in the inspection as a team member.

Pre-inspection analysis

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

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

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

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

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

Overall effectiveness

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

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

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

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

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

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

Grading

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

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

INSPECTION REPORT

KD Training Solutions

Contents

Summary

Description of the provider	1
Overall effectiveness	1
Key challenges for KD Training Solutions	1
Grades	2
About the inspection	2
Key Findings	2
What learners like about KD Training Solutions	6
What learners think KD Training Solutions could improve	6

Detailed inspection findings

Leadership and management	7
Equality of opportunity	8
Quality improvement	9
Business administration and law	10

INSPECTION REPORT

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROVIDER

1. KD Training Solutions (KDTs) is a private training provider which has been in operation since 2002. KDTs provides government-funded and privately funded courses in business management at level 2, 3 and 4. The owner is the only full-time member of staff. At the time of the inspection, one other person was employed part time on a consultancy basis. KDTs operates from the home of the owner of the company and hires accommodation for training as required.

2. KDTs has received government funding since 2004-05 through contracts with Swindon and Wiltshire Learning and Skills Council (LSC). In 2004-05, KDTs was funded through the employer training programme to run a level 2 course in team leadership for 35 learners. In addition, seven learners were funded for the certificate in management at level 3. For 2005-06, KDTs's contract has been through the Skills for Business Initiative which is funded by the LSC, the Regional Development Agency and the European Social Fund. In addition, KDTs is subcontracted by Swindon College to provide business management training. Currently, there are 44 government-funded learners.

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS

Grade 2

3. **The overall effectiveness of provision is good.** The provision in business management is outstanding. Leadership and management are good, as are the provider's arrangements for equality of opportunity and quality improvement.

4. **The inspection team was broadly confident in the reliability of the self-assessment process.** KDTs produced a self-assessment report for the inspection. The report was written in accordance with guidance from the LSC, and identified key strengths and weaknesses appropriately for each of the key questions in the Common Inspection Framework. Grades were awarded for each key question. However, the report did not give separate grades for the area of learning, and leadership and management. There were no contributory grades for equality of opportunity and quality improvement. The findings of the report broadly matched those of inspectors, including key strengths and the grades that were given.

5. **The provider has demonstrated that it is in a good position to make improvements.** KDTs has a strong commitment to continuous quality improvement. It has good quality improvement arrangements which have proved effective to date. KDTs has identified aspects of the provision which could be further improved, such as initial assessment and formal progress reviews, and is making progress in taking appropriate actions.

KEY CHALLENGES FOR KD TRAINING SOLUTIONS:

- identify additional high-quality staff
- further develop initial assessment

KD TRAINING SOLUTIONS

- improve line managers' support for learners
- establish a formal progress review process

GRADES

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

Grades awarded at inspection

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

Business administration and law			1
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade	
<i>Business management</i>			<i>1</i>
Other government-funded provision	44	1	

ABOUT THE INSPECTION

6. The inspection took place between 6 June and 8 June 2006. This was the only visit. Leadership and management, including equality of opportunity and quality improvement, were inspected and graded. The government-funded business management provision was also inspected and graded.

Number of inspectors	2
Number of inspection days	6
Number of learners interviewed	16
Number of staff interviewed	2
Number of employers interviewed	5
Number of locations/sites/learning centres visited	1

KEY FINDINGS

Achievements and standards

7. **Retention, achievement and progress are very good.** Of the 35 level 2 learners in 2004-05, 93 per cent completed the course successfully. Learners' progression from this programme to the level 3 certificate in management in 2005-06 is good, at 40 per cent of learners. Six of the seven learners enrolled on the level 3 certificate in management in 2004-05 completed in good time and one learner is still on the programme. Of the 40 learners who enrolled in October 2005, only one has left the programme before

completing their objectives. Of the 26 learners on the level 3 certificate in management, 22 are making good progress and the other four have appropriate action plans. Of the 13 who enrolled on the level 4 diploma in management, 10 are making suitable progress and the other three have appropriate action plans.

8. Learners develop their management skills very well. Many learners provide clear examples of the way that the programme has improved their management skills. Employers also recognise significant improvements in learners' abilities, notably in team management.

The quality of provision

Grades given to learning sessions

	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Total
Business administration and law	0	1	0	0	1
Total	0	1	0	0	1

9. The course materials developed by KDTS are particularly good. A comprehensive set of self-study guides and assignment briefs covers the content of the courses unit by unit. The materials are very clear and are written in plain English. Learners are very positive about the usefulness and accessibility of the materials. KDTS has developed a comprehensive website which includes all the in-house materials. The website also provides a good range of additional information to help learners to extend their studies.

10. The structure of the programmes is particularly good. In addition to the independent study guides and assignment briefs, there are monthly workshops. The cycle of workshops is well planned to take learners through the course in a structured programme which is linked to the assignment brief for each unit. Learners who keep up to date with the cycle of workshops and assignments make excellent progress. The workshops are particularly well facilitated by KDTS's staff. They help to illustrate management theory by linking it to the learners' job roles and experiences. The sessions ensure that all learners are involved. The accommodation used for the workshops is very good and offers an excellent learning environment for adults.

11. KDTS offers particularly effective academic support to learners. A very thorough induction is extremely informative and highly effective in ensuring that learners understand clearly what is required in order for them to complete their courses. KDTS's staff are highly skilled at giving learners, who have little recent experience of learning, the confidence to succeed. Learners are encouraged to ask for support at any time. They are able to ask for support by e-mail, telephone or in person. When required, learners receive good additional support through individual tutorials. Alternative arrangements are made to support learners who are having difficulties. For example, learners who have moved from the geographical area have been retained as distance learners. Learners who fall behind with their assignments are given clear alternative deadlines which fit in with their individual circumstances. Additional learning needs are normally identified by the provider working closely with employers. Appropriate additional support is provided where the need is identified. KDTS's staff go to great lengths to ensure that all learners succeed.

12. Assessment practice is of a very high quality. Clear and comprehensive written feedback is provided about each assignment. Learners are given the option of submitting a

draft assignment. Responses to draft assignments are given quickly and are considered very valuable in guiding learners to complete their final assignments.

13. KDTS has excellent relationships with employers. However, line managers are not always sufficiently involved in learners' programmes. In most cases, learners' progress is not reviewed formally and progress reports are not offered to employers automatically. Employers do receive good, informal feedback.

Leadership and management

14. **The leadership and management of the provision are very effective.** The owner is strongly committed to providing excellent business management training with a clear focus on meeting the needs of learners. KDTS works closely with employers and is very well regarded for its professionalism and responsiveness. The programmes are managed to give a flexible and appropriate provision to meet the needs of learners and employers.

15. KDTS has appropriate policies and procedures relating to staff recruitment. These focus on ensuring that staff are well qualified and appropriately experienced. KDTS does not have a strategy for staff development, which is seen as an individual responsibility. The accommodation hired by KDTS for workshop sessions is of good quality and is well equipped. Resources are managed appropriately for learners.

16. **Communications between the two members of staff are effective. They meet regularly, on a formal and an informal basis. Formal meetings are minuted.**

17. KDTS does not have a formal process to identify and meet additional literacy, numeracy or language needs. It is planning to introduce appropriate initial assessment of learners' needs in the near future.

18. The use of management information is fit for purpose. KDTS has developed a spreadsheet to monitor learners' progress. Individual learners' files include copies of the assignments and assessment feedback. They also include records of individual tutorials. However, other contacts with learners or employers are not systematically recorded or kept on file.

19. **KDTS provides good support for identified individual learners' needs.** It has a strong commitment to ensuring that all learners achieve their potential. Learners are encouraged to request additional support at any time. This extends beyond academic support, and learners with specific personal issues are always encouraged to stay on programme. In all cases, KDTS works with learners to resolve their difficulties.

20. KDTS has equal opportunities policies for learners and for staff. At induction, learners are given a brief introduction to KDTS's commitment to providing equality of opportunity for all learners. Complaints and appeals procedures are also available to learners and are covered at induction. KDTS makes appropriate arrangements to provide accessible accommodation for learners with restricted mobility.

21. The provider produces regular data reports on recruitment by age, disability, ethnic background and gender. Learners are pre-selected by employers and KDTS is not able to target under-represented groups directly.

22. **Quality improvement arrangements are good.** The provider has a strong commitment to continuous improvement. Any issues raised are resolved quickly. KDTS has good quality assurance arrangements which are used effectively. KDTS is identifying some key areas of the provision for improvement. Examples include formal progress reviews and initial assessment. Internal moderation arrangements are satisfactory and meet awarding body requirements. Reports from the external verifier are good.

23. KDTS has appropriate arrangements for gathering feedback from learners and employers. Learners are asked to complete questionnaires twice each year. In addition, informal feedback is requested regularly. Most of the feedback from employers is informal. KDTS responds well in resolving issues of concern raised by employers.

24. The self-assessment report was produced for the inspection. It was written using guidelines from the local LSC. The self-assessment report broadly reflected the findings of the inspection and the identified strengths.

Leadership and management

Strengths

- very effective leadership and management of provision
- good support for identified individual learners' needs
- good quality improvement arrangements

Weaknesses

- no significant weaknesses were identified

Business administration and law

Business management

Strengths

- very good retention, achievement and progress of learners
- very good development of management skills
- particularly good course materials
- particularly good programme structure
- particularly effective academic support
- very effective assessment practice
- very well-managed programmes

Weaknesses

- no significant weaknesses were identified

WHAT LEARNERS LIKE ABOUT KD TRAINING SOLUTIONS:

- excellent course materials
- brilliant location and facilities
- 'the course is so relevant to my work'
- 'learning is fun, it's so nice to be there'
- 'it's made such a difference to the way I manage'

WHAT LEARNERS THINK KD TRAINING SOLUTIONS COULD IMPROVE:

- 'I'd like stronger support at work'
- 'formal meetings to review progress would be good'

DETAILED INSPECTION FINDINGS

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Grade 2

Strengths

- very effective leadership and management of provision
- good support for identified individual learners' needs
- good quality improvement arrangements

Weaknesses

- no significant weaknesses were identified

25. The leadership and management of the provision are very effective. The owner is strongly committed to providing excellent business management training which is clearly focused on meeting the needs of learners. KDTS is an accredited centre for a leading awarding body for business management qualifications. The provider began operating in 2002 with privately funded learners. The expansion into government-funded training has been well managed. KDTS now integrates privately funded and government-funded learners on courses that are inclusive and very well structured.

26. KDTS has developed excellent working relationships with local employers which have enabled it to expand its provision. Strong leadership and management have enabled KDTS to expand the provision successfully at the same time as implementing continuous quality improvements. To date, KDTS has successfully safeguarded the quality of the provision by employing a well-qualified member of staff on a part-time consultancy basis. This member of staff is responsible for teaching and assessing some of the units, as well as internally moderating the assessment that is carried out by the owner. KDTS has developed a website which is easily accessed by learners and which includes comprehensive course materials in the form of independent study packs. The courses are designed so that unit and course accreditation can be achieved by working through the independent study packs, and completing the assignment briefs, which are also produced in-house. Monthly workshops ensure that learners have a good understanding of the course content and assessment requirements.

27. KDTS has appropriate policies and procedures for staff recruitment. These measures ensure that staff are well qualified and appropriately experienced. KDTS has found it difficult to recruit staff of the required calibre to maintain the quality of provision, but to date, the provider has been able to operate effectively with its existing staff. KDTS does not have a strategy for providing staff development, which is considered to be an individual responsibility. The provider hires good, well-equipped accommodation for workshop sessions. Overall, the resources are managed appropriately.

28. Communications between the two members of staff are effective. They meet regularly on a formal and informal basis. Formal moderation meetings are recorded appropriately. The staff meet to review the courses and to discuss learners' progress, and these meetings are also recorded appropriately. Communications with employers and learners are very effective.

29. Management information is used appropriately. KDTS has developed a spreadsheet to monitor learners' progress, which is updated after the internal moderation of assessments. Files are kept for each learner which include enrolment details and copies of assignments and assessment feedback. Individual tutorial records are also included in the files. Other contacts with learners or employers are not recorded systematically, or kept on file.

30. The provider does not have a formal process to identify and meet learners' literacy, numeracy and language support needs. There are plans to introduce appropriate initial assessments of learners' needs. Currently, the individual learners' needs are identified by employers, and KDTS provides appropriate support.

Equality of opportunity

Contributory grade 2

31. KDTS provides good support for identified individual learners' needs. The provider has a strong commitment to ensuring that all learners achieve their potential. This commitment is promoted at all stages of the courses from induction onwards. KDTS makes it clear that learners should ask for help with any difficulties that they may encounter throughout the programme. Learners are encouraged to request additional support by e-mail, telephone or in person at any time. All requests for support are responded to positively and appropriate arrangements are made to provide the support. This may include meeting learners for individual tutorials at home, in the workplace or at other locations convenient to the learner.

32. The provider's support extends beyond academic support, and learners with particular personal issues are always encouraged to stay on the programme. If necessary, learners' progress through the programme is negotiated on an individual basis. There are examples of learners having their assignment deadlines extended, or being re-assigned as distance learners, or having the order of their course units re-arranged. In all cases, KDTS works with learners to resolve their difficulties and enable them to continue with their training. The provider's retention and achievement rates are very good.

33. KDTS has equal opportunities policies for learners and for staff. The equal opportunities policy for learners is available on the provider's website. At induction, learners are given a brief introduction to KDTS's commitment to providing equality of opportunity for all learners. Complaints and appeals procedures are also available to learners. These procedures are included in the programme pack and are explained at induction. KDTS makes appropriate arrangements to ensure that the accommodation it uses for training is accessible to those learners with restricted mobility.

34. The equal opportunities policy for staff covers key aspects of their rights and responsibilities. Staff are expected to have an appropriate understanding of equality of opportunity. All staff development is considered to be the responsibility of the individual member of staff.

35. KDTS produces regular data reports about recruitment by age, disability, ethnic background and gender. As learners are generally pre-selected by their employers, KDTS is not able to directly target specific under-represented groups. However, under-representation is discussed with employers and the provider tries to ensure that recruitment to its programmes reflects the staffing profile of each employer.

Quality improvement**Contributory grade 2**

36. KDTS has good quality improvement arrangements. It has a strong commitment to continuous improvement and is quick to resolve any problems with the quality of provision. For example, learners' feedback about the accessibility of the website was responded to quickly. The provider regularly reviews its practices in order to improve the provision. A management review of quality assurance procedures takes place twice each year. Key aspects of the provision are also audited twice each year. In recent months, internal audits of enrolment and assessment processes have been carried out. The assessment audit identified a problem with the timely completion of assessments. An action plan has been agreed to improve the arrangements for next year.

37. KDTS is in the process of establishing some key areas of quality improvement. For example, it has produced guidelines and a form for formal observations of teaching and learning. This observation procedure has not been implemented as it is not considered necessary where there are only two teaching staff. Informal observations of teaching and learning do take place, but the outcomes are not recorded and no grades are given. The procedure does not focus on identifying key areas for improvement. KDTS has piloted the use of formal progress reviews this year, and is exploring the possibilities of extending this development next year. The introduction of formal initial assessment is also being investigated.

38. KDTS has appropriate arrangements to gather feedback from learners and employers. It uses questionnaires to gather formal feedback from learners twice each year. The feedback gained is useful in identifying areas of concern. In addition, opportunities for informal feedback are given during each workshop. The informal feedback is not recorded, but appropriate actions are taken to resolve any issues raised. KDTS has not been so successful in gaining formal feedback from employers. However, informal contacts with employers are good, and KDTS responds well to resolve issues of concern raised by employers.

39. The self-assessment report was produced for the inspection. The type of contract held by KDTS with the LSC does not require a self-assessment report to be produced. The self-assessment report was written in accordance with LSC guidance. It identified key strengths and weaknesses appropriately for each key question of the Common Inspection Framework, and gave grades for each key question. However, it did not give separate grades for the area of learning and leadership and management, or contributory grades for equality of opportunity and quality improvement. The findings of the self-assessment report generally matched the key strengths identified at inspection.

AREAS OF LEARNING

Business administration and law

Grade 1

Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Business management		1
Other government-funded provision	44	1

40. Thirty-nine learners have been on programmes since October 2005, through the Skills for Business Initiative. Courses include certificate and diploma courses in management at level 3 and level 4, respectively. In May 2006, five learners enrolled on the level 3 introductory certificate in management. Currently, there are 44 government-funded learners on KDTS's courses.

41. A nationally recognised awarding body has accredited KDTS as a training centre for qualifications in management. Training is provided by one full-time and one part-time member of staff who is employed on a consultancy basis. Both members of staff provide workshop sessions, and carry out assessment and internal moderation. One unit of each course is assessed externally. Four hours of workshop sessions are available for each group on a monthly basis. Currently, there are two groups of learners on the level 3 certificate in management course, and two groups on the level 4 diploma in management course. One group of learners is working for the level 3 introductory certificate in management.

Business management

Strengths

- very good retention, achievement and progress of learners
- very good development of management skills
- particularly good course materials
- particularly good programme structure
- particularly effective academic support
- very effective assessment practice
- very well-managed programmes

Weaknesses

- no significant weaknesses were identified

Achievement and standards

42. Data shows that the retention, achievement and progress of learners are very good. Of the 35 level 2 learners in 2004-05, 93 per cent completed the course successfully. The progression of learners from the level 2 programme in 2004-05 to the level 3 certificate in management in 2005-06 was good, at 40 per cent. Of the seven learners enrolled on the level 3 certificate in management in 2004-05, six achieved the qualification within the expected timescale, and one is still in training and is on target to achieve the qualification.

Of the 40 learners who began their programmes in October 2005, only one has left the programme before completing their objectives. Most learners are making good progress. Of the 26 learners on the level 3 certificate in management, 22 are up to date with their assignments. Of the 13 learners on the level 4 diploma in management course, 10 are on target with their assignments and the other three have appropriate action plans to enable them to complete their programmes. Learners' attendance at the workshop sessions is good, and their assignment work is of a high standard. They enjoy the programme and speak very positively about the provision.

43. Learners develop their management skills very well. Many learners provide clear examples of the way that the programme has improved their management skills, such as improved management of staff performance. Employers also recognised significant improvements in learners' abilities, notably in team management.

44. Because the programmes have only been operating since 2004-05, the report does not include a table to show retention and achievement rates.

The quality of provision

45. The course materials developed by KDTS are particularly good. The owner of KDTS has produced comprehensive in-house course materials and assignment briefs to cover the content of the courses, and the assessment requirements of the awarding body. These materials are written in clear language. The course materials and assignments are organised to cover the course unit by unit. The course materials are produced in the form of independent study guides. They are sufficiently clear and well structured to enable learners to use them as for distance learning if necessary. The materials are reviewed regularly and further amendments are made as appropriate. The focus is always on making the materials easy to understand for learners. They are very positive about the usefulness and accessibility of the materials.

46. KDTS has developed a comprehensive website which includes all of its in-house materials. The website is considered to be the learners' gateway to KDTS's training programmes. All learners are expected to use the website to access the independent study guides and the assignment briefs. The website also provides a good range of additional, appropriate information to help the learners to extend their studies.

47. The structure of the programmes is particularly good. In addition to the independent study guides for each unit, monthly workshops are held to ensure that learners fully understand the content of each unit and the assessment requirements. The cycle of workshops is planned well to take learners through the course in a structured and coherent programme, unit by unit. Each workshop covers a unit of the course and the learners are expected to complete the related assignments before the next workshop. Learners who keep up to date with this planned cycle make excellent progress and complete their qualifications in good time. The workshops are particularly well presented by KDTS's staff who use their skills expertly to develop the learners' knowledge and understanding. The workshop sessions illustrate the relevance of management theories to learners' job roles and experience.

48. The workshop sessions ensure that all learners are involved. Individual learning styles are identified at induction and are accommodated appropriately by staff in the workshops.

KD TRAINING SOLUTIONS

The accommodation used for the workshops is very good, and offers an excellent learning environment for adults. Where appropriate, short courses such as the level 2 course in team leadership are delivered on employers' premises.

49. KDTS offers particularly effective academic support to learners. A very thorough induction, which normally lasts for six hours, is extremely informative and highly effective in ensuring that learners understand clearly what is required of them in order to complete their courses successfully. Learners appreciate the value of the induction and speak very positively about how well it prepares them for the demands of the course. KDTS's staff are highly skilled at instilling confidence in those learners who have little recent experience of learning. Learners have easy access to good advice and guidance if they have difficulties with understanding the course content, or the requirements of the assignments. They are encouraged to ask for support at any time. Learners are very positive about the availability of such support and how quickly it is provided. They are able to ask for support by e-mail, telephone or personal contact.

50. Access to workshops is flexible, and learners are encouraged to attend an alternative session if they are unable to attend their scheduled workshop. When necessary, learners may request good additional support through individual tutorials in the workplace or elsewhere. Staff also initiate such tutorials when necessary. All learners who have difficulties in making appropriate progress receive very good encouragement to complete their courses. Alternative arrangements are made to suit individual circumstances. For example, some learners who have moved from the geographical area have been retained as distance learners. In all such cases, learners receive good regular support and encouragement.

51. Assessment practice is of a very high quality. Clear and comprehensive written feedback is provided about the quality of each assignment. Learners are given the option of submitting a draft assignment so that they can feel confident about fulfilling the assessment requirements. Responses to draft assignments are made quickly. Detailed feedback about the quality of their work keeps learners well informed of their progress. At the time of the inspection, most learners were near the end of their courses. They were making good progress and had a good understanding of what they had to do to gain the qualification.

52. Currently, KDTS does not carry out an initial assessment of learners' literacy, numeracy or language support needs. Learners' additional learning needs are normally identified by KDTS before their enrolment, through close liaison with employers. Few learners are identified as having additional learning needs, but appropriate additional support is provided where the need is identified. KDTS's staff go to great lengths to ensure that all learners succeed. To date, this support has been very effective.

53. KDTS has developed excellent relationships with employers. However, employers' line managers are not always involved sufficiently in learners' programmes. Although some employers offer significant time and support for learners to complete their assignments, some line managers have little knowledge of the programme requirements of their employees. Not all learners are given sufficient opportunities to gain additional experience and integrate their learning with their work. Employers and KDTS's staff recognise this problem and are working together to improve line managers' involvement.

54. In most cases, learners' progress is not formally reviewed. A pilot review process has been trialled with some learners and the benefits have been recognised. Progress reports are not offered automatically to the employer, although reports are available on request. However, good informal feedback is given to employers. Employers generally offer appropriate encouragement to learners to complete their courses. KDTS receives very positive feedback from employers about the effectiveness of the programme in improving the learners' performances in the workplace.

Leadership and management

55. KDTS manages the programmes very well. The owner works closely with employers to ensure that learners are recruited to the most appropriate course. KDTS is very well regarded by employers for its professionalism and responsiveness. Communications with employers are good. The programmes are managed to provide flexible and appropriate provision to meet the needs of learners and employers. The two members of staff are well qualified and experienced. Learning materials are very well designed and written in plain English. The accommodation used for training is very good.

56. Internal moderation arrangements are satisfactory and meet awarding body requirements. Reports from the external verifier are good. Quality improvement arrangements are effective, in providing continual improvement. The self-assessment report reflected the key strengths identified by inspection.

