

INSPECTION REPORT

The Academy (Malton) Ltd

22 July 2004



ADULT LEARNING
INSPECTORATE

Grading

Inspectors use a seven-point scale to summarise their judgements about the quality of learning sessions. The descriptors for the seven grades are:

- *grade 1 - excellent*
- *grade 2 - very good*
- *grade 3 - good*
- *grade 4 - satisfactory*
- *grade 5 - unsatisfactory*
- *grade 6 - poor*
- *grade 7 - very poor.*

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

- *grade 1 - outstanding*
- *grade 2 - good*
- *grade 3 - satisfactory*
- *grade 4 - unsatisfactory*
- *grade 5 - very weak.*

The two grading scales relate to each other as follows:

SEVEN-POINT SCALE	FIVE-POINT SCALE
grade 1	grade 1
grade 2	
grade 3	grade 2
grade 4	grade 3
grade 5	grade 4
grade 6	grade 5
grade 7	

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 over 16
- provision in further education colleges for people aged 19 and over
- **learndirect** provision
- Adult and Community Learning
- training funded by Jobcentre Plus
- education and training in prisons, at the invitation of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Prisons.

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

Overall judgement

Where the overall judgement is that the provision is adequate, only those aspects of the provision which are less than satisfactory will be reinspected.

Provision will normally be deemed to be inadequate where:

- more than one third of published grades for occupational/curriculum areas, **or**
- leadership and management are judged to be less than satisfactory.

This provision will be subject to a full reinspection.

The final decision as to whether the provision is inadequate rests with the Chief Inspector of Adult Learning. A statement as to whether the provision is adequate or not is included in the summary section of the inspection report.

INSPECTION REPORT

The Academy (Malton) Ltd

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INSPECTION REPORT

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROVIDER

1. The Academy Malton Limited (The Academy) is a private limited company, offering work-based learning programmes in hairdressing and beauty therapy. In 1999, The Academy gained its own contract with the local Learning and Skills Council (LSC) after previously working with a local provider as a subcontractor. Ten of the learners are employed in the salons of the parent company which has been established over 25 years and has four salons located in the Ryedale area (Malton, Norton, Pickering and Kirkbymoorside). Other learners are employed in salons in York, Scarborough and the Malton area. The Academy also offers privately funded training in hairdressing and beauty therapy. The training centre is situated in the centre of the market town of Malton which lies within the Ryedale area. Ryedale is situated in the North of Yorkshire and is a sparsely populated district with most workers using their own transport.

2. The director of the company is the owner of The Academy and has responsibility for business development, marketing and human resources, and also tutors the advanced modern apprentices on the level 3 hairdressing course. An office manager looks after all the administration functions as well as providing key skills support for learners. There are seven part-time staff who are involved in the delivery of the training programmes. This includes an internal verifier for hairdressing and one for beauty. As well as carrying out internal verification activities they provide guidance and support to The Academy's director and staff.

3. The Academy is funded through North Yorkshire LSC for foundation and advanced modern apprenticeships in hairdressing, and advanced modern apprenticeships in beauty. The 2001 census shows that less than 1 per cent of the local population is from minority ethnic groups, compared with 9.1 per cent for England and Wales.

SCOPE OF PROVISION

Hairdressing & beauty therapy

4. There are 17 learners on hairdressing programmes. Approval for beauty therapy was gained from the awarding body in November 2003 and there are three learners. There are 12 foundation modern apprentices and eight advanced modern apprentices. Learners attend the training centre in Malton one day each week for practical training, background knowledge and key skills. There are also clients booked in for practical assessments. Learners are assessed in their salons. There are currently nine staff in different salons who carry out assessments. Presently all work-based assessors are located in the parent company salons. The Academy is currently working with other external salons to increase the number of qualified work-based assessors. It also has a member of staff who visits the salons where there is no qualified assessor when requested by the learners. There are two internal verifiers, one for hairdressing and one for beauty, who plan and carry out visits to The Academy one day each month. All teaching staff work part time, mostly for one day

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a week. Most of the teachers are employed in the parent company as stylists or therapists as well as at The Academy.

ABOUT THE INSPECTION

Number of inspectors	3
Number of inspection days	12
Number of learner interviews	23
Number of staff interviews	15
Number of employer interviews	6
Number of locations/sites/learning centres visited	16
Number of partner/external agency interviews	1

OVERALL JUDGEMENT

5. The quality of the provision is adequate to meet the reasonable needs of those receiving it. More specifically, the quality of hairdressing and beauty therapy provision is good, as is the leadership and management and the arrangements for equality of opportunity and quality assurance.

GRADES

grade 1 = outstanding, grade 2 = good, grade 3 = satisfactory, grade 4 = unsatisfactory, grade 5 = very weak

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

Hairdressing & beauty therapy		2
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Hairdressing		
- Work-based learning for young people	17	2
Beauty therapy		
- Work-based learning for young people	3	None

KEY FINDINGS

Achievement and standards

6. High standards of professional practice are demonstrated by staff and learners.

Standards of health, hygiene and personal presentation are good. All learners adhere to strict codes of conduct. There is a strong emphasis on preparing learners for employment and ensuring that they make a successful transition to stylists or therapists.

7. Learners make good progress towards the completion of the modern apprenticeship frameworks. There are regular assessment opportunities and many of the learners have access to an assessor in their salon who assesses them on their daily activities. Some learners have had to retake the external key skills tests and they have not completed the framework within the funding timescale.

8. Retention and achievement rates are satisfactory at around 54 per cent for 1999 to 2002. There is an upward trend in the number of learners remaining in learning and learners are progressing well.

Quality of education and training

Grades awarded to learning sessions

	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Total
Hairdressing & beauty therapy	1	2	1	0	0	0	0	4
Total	1	2	1	0	0	0	0	4

9. Inspectors observed good teaching and learning. Of the four lessons observed, one was outstanding, and the others were good or very good. Practical skills are taught to a high level. In lessons, there is regular reference to industry best practice. Tutors give learners the benefit of their experience by providing tips about what works well in the industry. There is much emphasis on giving the client the best possible experience.

10. The teaching of background knowledge is good. Tutors teach the broader aspects of the subject as well as meeting national vocational qualification (NVQ) requirements. Learners' written work includes well presented, detailed assignments. There is little use of information and communications technology.

11. There is particularly good support for learners. Learners get individual support from the staff which meets their needs and helps them progress. **Learners increase their confidence through improving their literacy and numeracy skills** and this helps them in the workplace.

12. The resources are adequate. Learners work in modern, well-equipped salons and most learners enjoy regular training in the salon. The accommodation at The Academy is small and does not accommodate the bigger groups. The floor covering is unsuitable for a hair and beauty salon and presents a hygiene hazard.

13. **Employers are insufficiently involved in the learners' programmes.** Progress reviews are not always carried out in the workplace and the opportunity to share information with the employer is not taken. Targets which are set during progress reviews are often vague and of little value to the learner. An action plan is used more effectively and this is well used by the learner, but the employer has little input into the action plan.

Leadership and management

14. **Staff work well together and are a close working team.** Effective communication takes place at regular team meetings which are aimed at monitoring the learners' progress. There are good links with employers through celebration events, competitions and a regular newsletter.

15. **Good partnerships have been formed with local schools.** The Academy hosts a range of activities aimed at raising the profile of work-based learning and breaking down the gender stereotypes. The Academy has had several successes with pupils who have been non attendees at school and have had over 90 per cent attendance on the hairdressing training course.

16. **There is a strong emphasis on equality and diversity with learners, staff and employers.** Learners show respect for their peers and are supportive of each others needs. Tutors emphasise equality and diversity in the teaching and encourage learners to value diversity in their dealings with clients.

17. Internal verification is satisfactory and meets awarding body requirements. Assessments are sampled regularly and detailed records are kept.

18. **There is no formal complaints procedure.** Complaints are dealt with informally, but there is no evidence to allow The Academy to identify trends.

19. **The agreement between The Academy and the employer is inadequate.** It does not clearly set out the expectations for the employer to ensure that the learner has the best possible learning experience. There is insufficient review of the arrangements between the employer and The Academy.

Leadership and management

Strengths

- strong promotion of equality and diversity with learners, staff and employers
- good involvement of staff in the self-assessment process
- systematic feedback from learners
- very effective partnerships with schools and other training providers
- good staff communication

Weaknesses

- inadequate review of the employer agreement

- insufficient formality in the handling of complaints

Hairdressing & beauty therapy

Hairdressing

Strengths

- good standard of professional practice in hairdressing
- good progress towards achievement of qualifications by learners
- good teaching and learning
- particularly good support for individual learners
- good links with employers

Weaknesses

- ineffective progress reviews

Beauty therapy

Strengths

- good standard of professional practice in beauty therapy
- good progress towards achievement of qualifications by learners
- good teaching and learning
- particularly good support for individual learners
- good links with employers

Weaknesses

- ineffective progress reviews

WHAT LEARNERS LIKE ABOUT THE ACADEMY (MALTON) LTD:

- the friendly staff
- good teaching
- the theory - I have learnt such a lot'
- good access to assessment - 'I get assessment on demand'
- being involved in competitions
- the individual support - 'it has been really good to know that there is always someone there to help me with my work'
- having the opportunity to succeed - 'it has been an amazing experience for me, I never thought that I would make it'
- the personal touch - 'they make me feel important'

WHAT LEARNERS THINK THE ACADEMY (MALTON) LTD COULD IMPROVE:

- the supply of clients - 'we need more'
- the water supply to the basins - 'it takes a long time for the tank to fill up'
- the carpet in The Academy - 'hoovering hair is difficult'
- the size of the premises - 'The Academy can get a bit crowded'

KEY CHALLENGES FOR THE ACADEMY (MALTON) LTD:

- improve the retention and achievement rates
- maintain the high standards of teaching and professional practice demonstrated by staff and learners
- improve progress reviews
- involve employers more in the learners' training programmes
- continue to quality assure the training through self-assessment and review
- continue to raise the profile of equality and diversity with learners, staff and employers

DETAILED INSPECTION FINDINGS

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Grade 2

Strengths

- strong promotion of equality and diversity with learners, staff and employers
- good involvement of staff in the self-assessment process
- systematic feedback from learners
- very effective partnerships with schools and other training providers
- good staff communication

Weaknesses

- inadequate review of the employer agreement
- insufficient formality in the handling of complaints

20. Staff communicate well and are a close-working, effective team. They have good knowledge of individual learners' needs and work collaboratively to achieve their success. Staff attend regular team meetings to review the learners' progress and to discuss developments such as changes in legislation and how to maintain standards in assessment. Staff are frequently involved in national and local competitions for hairdressing and success is promoted in the monthly newsletter which is also sent to employers. Good communication is enhanced by staff sharing their experience of frequent training events. Celebration evenings are enjoyed by learners, employers and staff. Assessors effectively communicate with the internal verifier and the office manager to update the wall charts which show learners' progress. Staff communicate well with employers through frequent telephone calls, regular visits, and a comprehensive pack of information.

21. Partnerships with local schools are particularly effective. The Academy hosts an after-school club and taster courses in hairdressing and NVQ level 1 courses for years 10 and 11. These courses have been well received by the schools and have helped to raise awareness of the industry. Courses for school pupils have helped to break down gender stereotypes. Several pupils have progressed into the modern apprenticeship programme. One pupil who did not enjoy school and who was unsuccessful at academic work has progressed from working on a Saturday to becoming an apprentice. This learner has performed particularly well in competitions and has greatly increased her confidence. Good networks have developed with local training providers. One provider has helped The Academy to develop its quality assurance system. Another provider has shared the costs and benefits of equality of opportunity training with The Academy.

22. Business planning is integral to The Academy's success, but unlike the self-assessment report which is developed by all staff, production of the plan mostly involves the managing director and office manager. The written plan includes the values of the

company and the strategic aims, but there is no clear explanation of the resources needed or the timescales and measures for success. General targets are set for staff to maintain the learners on their programmes and to help them achieve their aims by the contractual date for completion.

23. Resources are adequately managed. The premises are attractive and centrally located. The Academy recently invested in a new office building in response to the increasing numbers of learners. The ratio of staff to learners is adequate. Learners are encouraged to look smart and professional and demonstrate a strong corporate identity by wearing uniforms. There are sufficient materials for practical sessions. However, the training centre is sometimes too small for the larger groups of learners. The centre is carpeted which is a hindrance when removing hair cuttings.

24. Staff training is effectively planned and evaluated. Staff are suitably qualified and experienced and there are sufficient assessors and internal verifiers. The annual appraisal is a simple but effective way of prompting the review of staff performance, capturing feedback and agreeing development plans. The Academy does not have any qualified tutors for literacy and numeracy, but learners are well supported with these needs. When necessary, additional expertise has been gained from a local centre for dyslexia.

Equality of opportunity

Contributory grade 2

25. The promotion of equality and diversity is strong among staff, learners and employers. The Academy has links with other providers and has shared the experiences and the cost of specialist training for the staff. Three members of staff have attended training in equal opportunities and the information is communicated to other staff through the regular meetings. There is good awareness of equality and diversity within The Academy and the workplace salons. Learners show respect for their peers and are supportive of each others' needs. Employers make adjustments to accommodate learners' particular difficulties. For example, one learner has been given a reduced workload due to a back complaint. The Academy promotes inclusivity in its recruitment of staff and learners. Staff hours are arranged to fit around child commitments. Most learners are recruited from the Ryedale area and travel to work is difficult for many learners. This is considered when timetabling the off-the-job learning. Tutors emphasise equality and diversity in lessons and encourage learners to demonstrate empathy and respect for clients with differing needs. For example, in the lessons, learners are given challenging questions about how they would accommodate clients with restricted mobility when using basins in the hairdressing salon or the couches in the beauty therapy lessons.

26. Learners are given a handbook which contains a brief statement on equal opportunities and harassment, and an additional sheet on the grievance procedure. There is regular reinforcement of equal opportunities. Learners are questioned at the 12-weekly review and by the internal verifier to ensure learners have equal and fair opportunity to assessment. Learners have a good understanding of the appeals procedure and how to exercise this if they disagree with an assessment decision.

27. The equal opportunities policy is satisfactory. However, some of the language is

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more suited to college training, but in the main it is clear and comprehensive. The Academy does not ensure that the full policy is given to employers. The employer pack only contains a statement of intent and the role of the learner and the employee is not clear. All policies, including equal opportunities, are reviewed annually at the beginning of the new contract year. The provider's premises have access for learners and clients with restricted mobility.

28. Men are not well represented. There is only one male learner and all staff are women. The Academy has used strategies to deal with this through promotion in schools and has been successful in attracting more men for the next intake. Images on marketing materials promote hairdressing to under-represented groups, but the promotion of beauty has not had the same attention.

29. During the initial interview, information is gathered to monitor equality of opportunity. Due to the low numbers of learners, the provider can effectively monitor the progress of particular learners through visual wall charts and regular sharing of information among staff.

30. There is no effective procedure to handle complaints. The director can explain how complaints have been dealt with, but there is no clear record of the underlying reason for complaints or how they are handled. There is no written information to identify whether the complaint was handled successfully or what the outcome was. The provider cannot ensure that consistent action is taken or identify trends to ensure that action can be taken to prevent reoccurrence. Inspectors identified one complaint that had been made through a routine employer questionnaire. There was no evidence to support a satisfactory conclusion.

Quality assurance

Contributory grade 2

31. The Academy has sound systems for quality assurance including a manual of procedures. Staff are fully familiar with the procedures and the associated controlled documents. They refer to the procedures on a regular basis to ensure that the training processes are consistent. There is an effective annual audit of all policies and procedures. Staff also raise concerns verbally at the monthly meetings. For example, the progress review document was amended as it was not capturing sufficient information about the learners' progress. The internal audit takes place before the start of the new contract year. The Academy has used the expertise of an auditor from another work-based learning provider who has shared good practice with The Academy.

32. Learners' records are well maintained and up to date. The administration functions are well managed. Observations of teaching and assessing take place regularly, and The Academy's director observes assessors as part of the internal verification process. As well as assessment, the quality of teaching is also captured during these observations. However, the form used to record teaching observations focuses more on assessment and has insufficient essential criteria for teaching. Teachers receive prompt and detailed verbal feedback on the quality of their teaching and development needs are identified and acted upon. There is a particularly strong emphasis on ensuring that staff have

teaching skills and qualifications as well as good industry knowledge and competence.

33. Learners' feedback is sought regularly, analysed and collated. The feedback for the past four years has been positive. Learners receive a questionnaire at the end of each term and after short training courses. The results are effectively summarised and shared with all staff. Actions resulting from evaluation include the introduction of name badges and an increase in the numbers of hairdryers available. Clients have also given feedback and some have written letters to The Academy praising their service. However, the questionnaire has not been reviewed for some time and the questions are not appropriate to all learners.

34. All staff have been fully involved in the self-assessment process. Individual and group discussions have been held on the content of the report and the strengths and weaknesses. Staff have a strong sense of ownership of the report and refer to it in discussions. Many of the strengths in the self-assessment report were also identified by inspectors.

35. Management information is used adequately to monitor the learners' progress and process the financial claim for the contract. The Academy has yet to fully exploit the capabilities of the management information software. The provider uses wall charts effectively to record the learners' progress and these are updated regularly by the office manager. The provider summarises the achievement and retention rates, but does not record the completion of apprenticeships by intake in each year.

36. Internal verification is satisfactory and meets the demands of the awarding body. Two internal verifiers monitor the assessors effectively and regularly sample NVQ and key skills portfolios. Detailed records are maintained on the learners. Comprehensive feedback is given to assessors and it is also recorded. The assessment procedures are thorough and assessment practice is standardised. As well as sampling assessment, the internal verifiers provide extensive support, in particular with the new NVQ standards, to ensure that all the staff are well informed. Assessors are able to guide the learners confidently through their qualifications. Actions from awarding body reports are summarised and communicated to the staff.

37. The working relationship between The Academy and the employers is good. However, the agreement between The Academy and employers is inadequate. It is not used to review the training arrangements each year or to identify if expectations have been met by both parties. The agreement is not used to focus the co-ordination of the on- and off-the-job training.

AREAS OF LEARNING

Hairdressing & beauty therapy

Hairdressing & beauty therapy		2
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Hairdressing - Work-based learning for young people	17	2
Beauty therapy - Work-based learning for young people	3	None

Hairdressing

Strengths

- good standard of professional practice in hairdressing
- good progress towards achievement of qualifications by learners
- good teaching and learning
- particularly good support for individual learners
- good links with employers

Weaknesses

- ineffective progress reviews

Beauty therapy

Strengths

- good standard of professional practice in beauty therapy
- good progress towards achievement of qualifications by learners
- good teaching and learning
- particularly good support for individual learners
- good links with employers

Weaknesses

- ineffective progress reviews

Achievement and standards

38. Retention and achievement rates are satisfactory. Between 1999 and 2001 the retention and achievement rates for the advanced modern apprentices was 57 per cent. For the foundation modern apprentices for the same period the retention rate were 58 per cent and the achievement rates were 53 per cent. There is an upward trend in the

number of learners remaining in learning. Some learners have had to retake the key skills external tests and have not completed the framework. However, most learners are now progressing well and the key skills are being achieved in time.

39. There is a strong focus on professionalism and The Academy sets high standards for the learners. There is much emphasis on raising the profile of the industry. Most of The Academy's trainers also work in salons as senior staff and are good role models for the learners. Learners in hairdressing and beauty therapy have a good personal image, which reflects the industry and a professional attitude towards their work. The trainers demonstrate good standards of health and hygiene practices, which learners adhere to. Hairdressing and beauty therapy learners produce a good standard of practical work, covering a range of skills. They take pride in their portfolios which are well presented and include a good range of evidence.

40. Learners progress well towards achievement of qualifications. Most learners are on target and some will achieve before the expected end date. Learners who have previously worked as Saturday workers have had their prior learning recognised, and complete units such as shampooing early in the programme. Participation in hairdressing competitions is part of The Academy's training. This and the regular assessments enable learners to gain confidence, and quickly progress to the salon floor with their own clients.

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

LSC funded work-based learning																
Advanced modern apprenticeships (AMA)	2003-04		2002-03		2001-02		2000-01		1999-2000							
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
	Number of starts	7		4				8		6						
Retained*	0		0				4	50	4	67						
Successfully completed	0		0				4	50	4	67						
Still in learning	7		1				0	0	0	0						

*retained learners are those who have stayed in learning for at least the planned duration of their training programmes, or have successfully completed their programme within the time allowed

LSC funded work-based learning																
Foundation modern apprenticeships (FMA)	2003-04		2002-03		2001-02		2000-01		1999-2000							
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
	Number of starts	10		13		5		8		6						
Retained*	0		0		2		5	62	4							
Successfully completed	0		4		2		5	62	3							
Still in learning	9		3		0		0	0	0							

*retained learners are those who have stayed in learning for at least the planned duration of their training programmes, or have successfully completed their programme within the time allowed

Quality of education and training

41. There is good teaching and learning and lesson observations are good or better. Lessons are well planned and effectively delivered at the appropriate level. For example, NVQ level 3 learners were made aware of the importance of producing work at a high standard, and this included the approach to client consultation and style guidance on advanced techniques. The good ratio of staff to learners ensures learners receive prompt feedback on practical activities. Learners in the first half of their programme are setting and blow-drying clients' hair at good commercial speeds. Beauty therapy learners demonstrate good commercial practices in their treatments. The standard of learners' written work reflects the good background knowledge training. Learners produce neat and detailed assignments, which receive constructive feedback. Learners are encouraged to participate in discussions relating their own work experiences. Equality of opportunity is promoted and planned into the lessons and learners discuss how to accommodate the needs of clients with disabilities.

42. The programme is effectively planned and managed. Learners participate in a range of additional activities to broaden their knowledge of the industry. A well-publicised annual awards ceremony is held, when all learners receive certificates of participation. This is motivational for the learners and credit is given to the learners who have worked hard. It is a requirement of the programme that all learners participate in competitions as this encourages the development of creative skills as well as team working, planning, and time management. The Academy offers learners and employers additional training opportunities and learners can join the artistic team. Current learners are used when promoting modern apprenticeship recruitment at external events.

43. There is particularly good support for learners. There is an initial assessment to establish learners' literacy and numeracy levels and feedback forms part of the induction process to establish learners' needs. These are discussed in detail and the required level of key skills is determined. There is a good support system for learners with additional needs. For example, those with dyslexia can have additional support from the trainers or can be referred a specialist dyslexia unit. Some learners have additional individual support for key skills or literacy and numeracy, although staff frequently visit learners in the salons and make additional visits if required. The learners appreciate the open-door policy for academic or pastoral support. The Academy supports learners when they change salons or are relocating.

44. Learning resources are satisfactory. The Academy is adequate for the small groups, however, the floor covering is inappropriate for hairdressing and beauty therapy for hygiene reasons as it is difficult to clean. Learners are placed in modern busy salons, which cover a range of services. Most salons have a wide range of products and some salons offer learners additional product and skills training. Most salons are committed to the training programme and deliver on-the-job training. The Academy's trainers regularly update their skills through additional training.

45. The assessment process is satisfactory and is carried out to awarding body

standards. Learners have regular assessments in The Academy and in the salons. Half of the salons have assessors or staff working towards the qualifications. Written assignments are marked and returned until completed to the required standard. Learners have a clear understanding of the assessment systems and the appeals procedure. Assessments are monitored and displayed on wall charts for staff and learners' information.

46. Progress reviews are ineffective. They are regularly carried out, but not always in the workplace salons. Employers do not contribute to the progress review. The review is not regarded as a working or informative process to support the learner. Targets set at reviews are often vague and are of little value to the learner.

Leadership and management

47. The Academy has good links with employers and is promoting regular and effective communication. Employers are invited to celebrate learners' successes at the awards evening. Some of the employers are new to salon ownership and The Academy has supported them with industry requirements. There is a regular newsletter for learners and employers. The Academy promotes the training for assessor qualifications to employers and their staff. The opinions of learners and employers are regularly sought, evaluated and fed back, and resulting actions are given in the newsletter. The training is well managed and this is reflected in employer and learner feedback. Health and safety is actively promoted in The Academy and the salons. The employers receive a copy of the video on equal opportunities, which is used in the learners' training. Learners clearly understand equality of opportunity.