

INSPECTION REPORT

Kennedy Scott Training and Development

10 June 2002



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 training within the remit of a single inspectorate. The ALI is responsible for inspecting a wide range of government-funded learning, including:

- work-based training 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.

Inadequate provision

A provider's provision will normally be deemed to be less than adequate where

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

The final decision as to whether the provision is inadequate rests with the Chief Inspector of Adult Learning. The overall judgement as to whether the provision is adequate or inadequate is included in the summary section of the inspection report.

SUMMARY

The provider

Kennedy Scott Training and Development is a privately owned training consultancy. It offers training in the private and public sectors in Camden and Islington in London as well as Watford, Luton and Bedford. The company was formed in 1989 and is solely owned by the managing director. The public provision includes intensive Gateway to Work and Programme Centres. They are contracted through a number of Jobcentre Plus districts but are overseen by the London and the Southeast Jobcentre Plus office.

Overall judgement

The quality of the provision is adequate to meet the reasonable needs of those receiving it. Both areas are graded as good under the heading of foundation programmes. Leadership and management of the organisation are also good.

GRADES

Leadership and management	2
Contributory grades:	
Equality of opportunity	3
Quality assurance	3

Foundation programmes	2
Contributory grades:	
Programme Centres	2

KEY STRENGTHS

- good support for clients
- good training sessions
- good management

KEY WEAKNESSES

- insufficient reinforcement of equal opportunities
- incomplete quality assurance policy

OTHER IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

- more up-to-date equal opportunities training for staff

THE INSPECTION

1. Three inspectors spent a total of 12 days at Kennedy Scott Training and Development (Kennedy Scott) in June 2002. Fifty-nine clients were interviewed and 36 individual learning plans and 29 portfolios were reviewed. Nine provider sites were visited and 26 of the training provider's staff were interviewed. Seven learning sessions were observed and graded. Inspectors interviewed five Jobcentre Plus staff who are directly involved in Kennedy Scott contracts.

Grades awarded to learning sessions

	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Total
Foundation programmes	0	1	3	3	0	0	0	7
Total	0	1	3	3	0	0	0	7

THE PROVIDER AS A WHOLE

Context

2. Kennedy Scott is a privately owned company, limited by guarantee. Its head office is based in Rickmansworth in Hertfordshire and there are training centres in Camden and Holloway in Islington, Watford, Luton and Bedford. Contracts with Jobcentre Plus are for the intensive Gateway to Work and Programme Centres at each of the training centres. There are 932 clients. Kennedy Scott is a Jobcentre Plus preferred training provider and has to tender for each contract in competition with other preferred training providers. All training is given by Kennedy Scott's staff at their own training centres. Camden and Holloway services eight Jobcentre Plus offices including Camden, North Islington and a small part of Haringey. The 1991 census shows that the proportion of people from minority ethnic groups in these boroughs are between 17.8 per cent and 18.9 per cent. The unemployment rate in April 2002 was 3.8 per cent in Islington and 2.2 per cent in Camden, compared with 3.6 per cent in London as a whole and 3.1 per cent nationally. In 2001, the proportion of school-leavers achieving five or more general certificates of secondary education (GCSEs) at grade C or above was 50 per cent in Camden and 29 per cent in Islington, compared with the national average of 47.9 per cent.

3. The Luton and Bedford training centres are in the main population areas of Bedfordshire. Reduction in vehicle manufacturing and associated engineering industries has seen a shift towards finance, business services and retailing and distribution. In April 2002, the unemployment rate was 3.9 per cent in Luton and 2.9 per cent in Bedford, compared with 3.1 per cent nationally. In 2001, the proportion of school leavers achieving five or more GCSEs at grade C or above in Luton was 38 per cent and 49 per cent in Bedfordshire. The proportion of people from minority ethnic groups in Luton is 19.8 per cent, while in the county as a whole it is 5.1 per cent. In April 2002, the unemployment rate in Watford was 1.6 per cent compared with 3.1 per cent nationally. Educational attainment is high with 62 per cent of school leavers achieving five or more GCSEs at grade C or above. The proportion of people from minority ethnic groups in Watford is 9.9 per cent.

Programme Centres

4. Kennedy Scott has three Programme Centres covering Bedfordshire, Hertfordshire and Central London. Attendance at programme centres is mostly voluntary. Some clients are mandatory referrals from jobcentres. Most clients are referred by their advisers. Most clients are aged 25 years or over, but it is also available to New Deal clients who are referred by their personal adviser. Clients attend a one-week induction, during which they agree a personal training programme for up to 13 weeks. The training consists of jobsearch focusing on individual modules, individual support and supplementary advice, which is tailored to meet the needs of clients. Many clients do not have the personal qualities, confidence, motivation and skills needed to seek employment on their own.

5. Kennedy Scott offers good training to produce a curriculum vitae and offers effective jobsearch training. They also help clients to identify personal skills and areas for development. Modules include interview techniques, handling rejection at interviews, analysis of barriers to employment, information technology (IT) awareness, interpersonal skills and managing personal finance. Tutors are skilled at helping clients to identify realistic job aims, and in matching clients to appropriate vacancies. Clients have regular individual reviews every four weeks. They can use a good range of resources including telephones, stationery, photocopiers, fax, computers, e-mail and the Internet. A wide range of newspapers and journals are available and clients can request specialist publications. Twenty-nine per cent of clients find employment during, or within three months of, completing their programme.

6. Most of the teaching is satisfactory or better and is supported by adequate resources. There are particularly good working relationships between staff and clients. Staff have a clear empathy with clients who have been unemployed for long periods.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Grade 2

7. Kennedy Scott is a small organisation in Rickmansworth in Hertfordshire. It is owned by the managing director. There is a small team operating from the head office including the managing director, business development manager, office manager and programme development officer. Three training centre managers have control of the training centres and one is managed by a senior tutor. Kennedy Scott has 25 staff, most of whom are tutors or trainers, but the larger training centres have administrative support. Kennedy Scott has policies for equal opportunities and quality assurance which form part of the procedures manual which is in the process of being updated. The most recent self-assessment report was completed just before the inspection and is the first written against the 'Common Inspection Framework'.

STRENGTHS

- good internal communications
- good performance in external reviews
- good management
- good reflection of staff recruitment in the equal opportunities policy
- extensive internal monitoring process

WEAKNESSES

- incomplete quality assurance policy
- inadequate knowledge of quality systems by staff

OTHER IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

- link the self-assessment process to the review and development of policies and procedures
- more up-to-date equal opportunities training for staff

8. Management meetings are held every other month at each training centre in turn. All centre managers attend. There is a set agenda and notes are taken and displayed in each training centre. The managing director regularly visits the training centres and maintains an open and co-operative management style. A good newsletter has been produced and is sent to all staff. It includes information on corporate issues, training programmes, management, and general company information and lighter articles which encourages the staff to read the newsletter. Full staff meetings have been held to deal with important issues, but there have been difficulties in closing all training centres, so these will reduce and be replaced by the newsletter as the main communication process. An annual conference is also held.

9. Kennedy Scott is gaining good reports from external reviews. All of the training centres are currently rated as low risk by the Jobcentre Plus financial audit monitoring

process. This process reviews all financial aspects of contract compliance as well as document maintenance for each client. The monitoring visits are unplanned and no warning is given to the training provider. Jobcentre Plus also carries out quality performance reviews. These are focused on the quality of provision with regard to meeting clients' and training programme aims. The reviews have not yet been fully completed for all training centres, but the two that have been completed have been rated as low and medium risk.

10. Kennedy Scott operates a good open management style. All managers in training centres and at head office are easily accessible to all staff. Staff morale is good and this is reflected in the stability of the workforce. The staff are highly motivated to get clients back into the employment market. Management is flexible and includes home working as well as allowances for childcare arrangements. There is good teamwork between staff including co-tutoring, meetings and team sessions to discuss individual clients' progress. There are policies and procedures in place covering health and safety, equal opportunities and quality assurance. The procedures manual is in the process of being updated and will include the review of some policies.

Equality of opportunity

Contributory grade 3

11. Kennedy Scott's recruitment practices are a good reflection of their own equal opportunities policy. Staff are from a range of minority ethnic groups and some have a disability. Flexible provision is available for single parents. Several staff take the opportunity to work from home.

12. Several members of staff have undertaken equal opportunities training as part of the Open University and other training modules, but others have not received any formal training. The staff induction process includes reference to the company policy but does not check understanding or deal with any individual learning needs. It does not deal with bullying and harassment from either the clients' or the employees' viewpoint.

Quality assurance

Contributory grade 3

13. The quality assurance plan requires a visit every other month to each training centre to review a range of issues. The visits are unannounced, so that they replicate external procedures. The review includes health and safety checks on all equipment and resources, as well as fire and clients' safety such as insurance cover. Clients' administration is checked in detail to ensure that all contractual requirements are being met, as well as the needs of the clients. Training observation is also part of the review and the process includes a review of training plans, teaching style and corporate standards being maintained by staff. The quality assurance plan which defines this internal monitoring process is one of the policies due for review.

14. The quality assurance policy and procedures manual is in the process of being updated but several sections have still to be completed and included in the manual. Some policies are not being fully implemented. Training observations are taking place but there is no system to ensure that all staff are observed within set timescales. The system does not ensure that tutors are observed across the range of modules. The equal opportunities policy also requires monitoring during internal monitoring visits to centres. The documents for these visits do not include equal opportunities in the checklist and this means it is not systematically included in the internal review process.

15. Staff are unsure of the detail of the quality assurance system but they confirm that the system is in place. Many meetings and other staff support mechanisms are in place but do not cover the more informal processes of co-tutoring, shadowing and daily debrief meetings. It is sometimes not clear to employees who is responsible for internal quality assurance, as the centre manager and the quality assurance monitoring officer both carry out internal checks and observations. The process is not co-ordinated and this adds to the lack of understanding.

16. The most recent self-assessment report is the first against the 'Common Inspection Framework'. Some of the strengths and weaknesses identified by inspectors are shown in the self-assessment report but several were identified as no more than normal practice.

Good Practice

Several employees work from home by agreement with line managers. This makes best use of time and resources by reducing the time spent travelling in central London. It also allows single parents to organise their work routine around other needs.

AREAS OF LEARNING

Foundation programmes

Grade 2

Programmes inspected	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Programme Centres	932	2

17. Kennedy Scott offers training to 932 clients at its three Programme Centres, and short intensive Gateway provision for New Deal clients on four sites. Numbers on Gateway vary from groups of five to 15 at each site in any two-week training programme. The main aim of both training programmes is for clients to progress into jobs and/or improve their employability prospects. Programme Centre clients are eligible to attend if they are over 25 years of age and have been unemployed for longer than 26 weeks. Some New Deal clients are referred by their personal adviser for jobsearch training. The contracted training is for 16 weeks, but there is no maximum length of stay. All clients have a one-week induction during which they agree an individually tailored training programme of modules and an action plan covering an average of 13 weeks. Jobsearch activities include the preparation of a curriculum vitae, analysis of job vacancies, interview preparation, and job applications. Opportunities are available to develop additional skills in IT, managing personal finance, self-awareness and generic work skills such as timekeeping, concentration and stamina. Individual progress reviews take place at the end of the first week and at four-weekly intervals thereafter. Clients have a range of resources including telephones, photocopiers, stationery, computers, the Internet and e-mail. There is also a range of newspapers, journals and specialist publications to help with jobsearch.

18. The intensive Gateway programme is for clients who have not gained employment within four weeks of starting New Deal. The programme is designed to increase the chances of young people gaining a job by identifying the generic skills expected by employers. Clients are required to attend a two-week course for a minimum of 30 hours a week. At some training centres, there is an optional third week offered. Kennedy Scott offers additional modular training in certificated courses leading to health and safety, first aid and food hygiene qualifications. All clients have an induction which covers health and safety, equal opportunities, programme outline, and rights and responsibilities. Clients have training in employability and interpersonal skills, self-presentation, problem-solving and jobsearch advice and guidance. All clients keep a jobsearch log, are helped to update their curriculum vitae, make job applications and practise interview techniques. Tutors carry out individual reviews at regular intervals with each client.

The following table shows the achievement and retention rates available up to the time of the inspection.

Programme Centres										
Programme Centres	2001-02		2000-01		1999-2000		1998-99		1997-98	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
	Number of starts	1345		1913		2280		1257		
Retained*	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Planned learning completed	984	73	1446	76	1312	58	524	42		
Gained job	388	29	518	27	487	21	190	15		
Still in training	932	69	0	0	0	0	0	0		

*retained clients are those who have stayed in learning for at least the planned duration of their programme, or have successfully completed their programme within the time allowed, or who have gained employment during their time on the programme

STRENGTHS

- good support for clients
- good retention rates
- additional activities
- good training sessions
- good matching of clients to jobs

WEAKNESSES

- some poor resources
- insufficient reinforcement of equal opportunities

OTHER IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

- increase sharing of good practice

19. Kennedy Scott's staff work effectively in teams and have a flexible client-led approach to training and development activities. Staff offer regular individual sessions to review and monitor the client's progress. Tutors have daily team meetings to discuss each individual's development towards agreed targets and training strategies for the

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following day. Staff show empathy towards clients and often give individual coaching as an alternative to group sessions. Pastoral care is also good. Several members of staff have been trained in counselling and one member of staff is a qualified counsellor. Tutors ensure that each client has a meal at lunchtime and clients are often given lifts to interviews. Tutors give extra tuition in interview techniques immediately before an interview to increase the client's confidence.

20. Retention rates are good and improving on all programmes. Over the past four years, retention rates on Programme Centres have improved from 42 per cent to 73 per cent. Retention rates for starters on Gateway courses averages 70 per cent across all training centres. Some of the training centres are hindered by low referrals from Jobcentre Plus, which affects group sizes and means that some sessions are not interactive. To try to rectify this and improve awareness, Kennedy Scott offers Jobcentre Plus the opportunity to attend a mock induction session.

21. Kennedy Scott offers several additional activities. All clients are taken on visits to local libraries and are given valuable instruction on how to use the facilities for research and study. They are also enrolled as members, and encouraged to borrow CDs and cassettes, read newspapers and magazines to improve their jobsearch work. Clients also visit local companies and are given an insight into employers' needs. Kennedy Scott funds additional training which leads to certification in health and safety, first aid and food hygiene. Clients can also have individual coaching in using the Internet and basic IT skills.

22. Most of the training sessions were graded good or very good. Tutors have good subject knowledge and an empathy with the client group. Sessions include role-play and varied teaching methods. Clients are given good practical advice about how to improve their chances of gaining an interview and jobs. Clients are given good direction into relevant employment. Tutors have a good knowledge of their local labour markets and have effective links with employers. Current vacancies are introduced from the first day. Clients are encouraged to have realistic aims for sustainable employment. They produce good curriculum vitae and write clear and well-planned application forms and letters. Clients are given effective coaching in interview techniques and are helped to handle rejection at interviews. Job outcomes are satisfactory and meet national targets.

23. Resources at most of the sites are satisfactory. Clients can use a wide range of resources including telephones, faxes, photocopiers, stationery, IT equipment and the Internet. They also have appropriate newspapers, magazines and journals. Most of the sites are leased and are well suited to training, but accommodation is poor at one site which is rented from another training provider. Equipment which belongs to the other training provider is in one corner of the room and this hinders movement and is a health and safety hazard. At another site, the room layout does not encourage good group interaction. Some learning resources, such as handouts, have been photocopied and the quality is very poor. Layout is unsatisfactory with large pieces of information missing because of the poor copying process. Handouts contain spelling mistakes and there is too much small print for clients who have poor reading skills. However,

Kennedy Scott have produced some excellent training materials and handouts which are not routinely shared at present. There is limited sharing of good training practice and learning resources across all sites.

24. Tutors do not always challenge the clients' use of gender stereotypes during jobsearch activities. Some tutors are not aware that they use inappropriate language. In one Programme Centre induction, equal opportunities were not covered in sufficient detail. In one Gateway training session, the tutor only pointed out what kind of clothes would be appropriate for men at interview, despite there being a woman in the group.

Good Practice

Clients from one Gateway course spend a day at a local community centre for IT training. Activities include using digital and video cameras to produce magazines and newsletters about their experiences. One group carried out a survey in the local community, then produced the results in the newsletter.

Clients take part in an activity to identify additional skills to enhance their personal profiles. They are given a useful prompt list of key words and phrases to describe themselves and their skills. This results in an effective but clear and simple curriculum vitae for each client.

Poor Practice

In one session, a tutor continuously failed to acknowledge the views and comments of one client. In another session which only had two participants, the tutor spent several minutes with his back to one client.