



Smart Rehabilitation

Learning how to get better outcomes



Prisonimage: HMP Featherstone



Prisoners Education Trust

Nina Champion
Head of Policy, Prisoners Education Trust
(Secretariat for PLA)



In November 2012, Prisoners Education Trust established the Prisoner Learning Alliance (PLA). The aim of the PLA is; 'To bring together diverse non-statutory stakeholders with senior cross-departmental officials, to provide expertise and strategic vision to inform future priorities, policies and practices relating to prison education, learning and skills'.

The Chair is Alexandra Marks, who is also Chair of Prisoners Education Trust. Prisoners Education Trust provide the Secretariat for the PLA with generous financial support from The Monument Trust, Esmee Fairbairn Foundation, Paul Hamlyn Foundation and The Bromley Trust as part of the Learning Matters advocacy project. We also benefit from the support of meeting room hire from Linklaters Solicitors.

In its first year (2012/2013), the PLA membership was:

- Mark Blake, Project Development Officer, Black Training and Enterprise Group
- John Brenchley, Senior Manager, Head of Offender Learning and Skills Group, OCR (Oxford, Cambridge and RSA Examinations)
- Toni Fazaeli, Chief Executive, Institute for Learning
- Christine Fisher, Associate, International Centre for Prison Studies, University of Essex
- Rachel Halford, Director, Women in Prison
- Juliet Hope, Founder / CEO, StartUp
- Dr. Jane Hurry, Co-Director of CECJS, Reader in the Psychology of Education, Centre for Education in the Criminal Justice System (CECJS) at the Institute of Education, University of London
- Maria McNicoll, Head of Prisons, Senior Management Team, St. Giles Trust
- Jessica Plant, Arts Alliance Manager, Arts Alliance, Clinks
- Michala Robertson, Assistant Director, Widening Access and Success Service, Open University
- Keiron Tilley, Director of Operations, Prison Radio Association
- Max Tucker, Assistant Programme Manager, User Voice
- Sarah Turvey, Co – Founder and Co-Director, Prison Reading Groups
- Paul Warner, Director of Employment and Skills, Association of Employment and Learning Providers
- Charlotte Weinberg, Executive Director, Safe Ground
- Christopher Winter, Managing Director, Care First

The PLA meets on a quarterly basis. Along with PLA members, meetings have been attended by senior officials from the Department of Business, Innovation & Skills, Ministry of Justice, Skills Funding Agency, Education Funding Agency, Youth Justice Board, National Offender Management Service, Department of Work & Pensions, Ofsted, IMB and LSIS. In each meeting there is space on the agenda to hear directly from a prisoner or ex-prisoner learner. We also had one meeting in a London prison where we spoke to five prisoner learners and the Governor.

The PLA members formed three Task and Finish Groups and each group held an expert roundtable event to gather evidence from over 50 different practitioners, officers, teachers, managers, governors, organisations and learners to help inform this report.

The work of the Prisoner Learning Alliance is currently being evaluated by Jim Coe & Steve Tibbett.

The PLA logo was kindly designed by a prisoner at HMP Highpoint, facilitated by Gensita Dunham, Art & Design Curriculum Manager, A4E.



Foreword

Learning in prison works. That is the overwhelming message I have taken from my year as Chair of the Prisoner Learning Alliance. That is the message from the expert organisations that form the Alliance with first hand experience of working in the prison system. It is the message of research and, most powerfully, it is the message from the personal stories we have heard from prisoners who have used education as their route out of offending and towards better lives, giving back to society.

As Ofsted has recently highlighted, prison education could work a whole lot better than it does today. In our meetings and roundtable focus groups, we have been grappling with some fundamental strategic issues including the purpose of education in prison, how to develop a learning culture and how to improve the learning journey in custody and through the gate.

It is vital that we address these questions now, when so much is changing so rapidly in the Criminal Justice environment. For example, 2012/13 saw the introduction of phase four of the Offender Learning and Skills contracts which are still bedding in; we will shortly see the introduction of resettlement and non-resettlement prisons, Secure Colleges and Community Rehabilitation Companies; and, alongside all of this, large, cumulative cost savings are being made across the prison estate.

In this report, the Prisoner Learning Alliance tackles strategic questions about using limited and reducing resources to help secure the best outcomes, so that prisoners can desist from crime and make a positive contribution to their families and society.

In this time of unprecedented change, it is crucial that the role of learning in achieving rehabilitation outcomes is championed at the highest levels. The increasingly complex matrix of providers and commissioners means that improved co-ordination is key, from a government departmental level down to a local level. Aligning outcomes would help ensure that different stakeholders' policies do not conflict with each other, and that cutting costs in one area does not inadvertently damage opportunities for making greater cost savings elsewhere through reducing reoffending.

We believe that a more joined-up, outcome-focused and value-driven approach should lead to improvements, and shape how the Offender Learning and Skills contracts evolve to fit the new criminal justice landscape. We hope this report will provide constructive thinking and encouragement for policy makers, civil servants and practitioners working to secure better outcomes for prisoners and ultimately society as a whole.

Alexandra Marks
(Chair of Prisoner Learning Alliance, and of Prisoners Education Trust)

Prisoner Learning Alliance: A united voice



Maria McNicholl, Head of Prison Projects, St. Giles Trust

"St Giles Trust is excited to be a member of such a dynamic, effective and credible forum as the PLA. The Alliance unites a hugely diverse range of skills and expertise across prisoner education and provides a forum to discuss, explore and identify key issues and innovation within this sector. The power of a united voice from all the organisations involved has been the key to its effectiveness coupled with the opportunities to talk directly to prison governors and government departments. Promoting the learner voice and listening to the real experience of prisoners has also been invaluable. Finally, as an organisation focused on through the gates support the PLA has identified in this report genuine, viable models of education that can support successful resettlement."



Jessica Plant, Arts Alliance Manager, Clinks

"The Arts Alliance and Clinks are delighted to be part of the Prisoner Learning Alliance and contribute to this timely and necessary area of enquiry. This report effectively communicates a crucial ambition to truly put learning at the core of rehabilitation. The report's findings on creative and innovative practice highlights the essential role of arts organisations within the Criminal Justice System, which echoes the Arts Alliance recent research. This report, for the first time joins up prison education with the growing body of evidence on desistance theory and more importantly it provides practical models for how it can be implemented at a policy level and on the ground to improve outcomes for learners."



Toni Fazaeli, Chief Executive, Institute for Learning

"The Institute for Learning (IfL) is pleased to be a member of the Prisoner Learning Alliance. The dynamic between teachers or trainers and their learners, whether inside or outside of prisons, is what makes highly effective learning possible. In addition to excellent subject or vocational knowledge and expertise in teaching methods, teachers in prisons need to be highly skilled in making learning work in the secure context. As the professional body for teachers and trainers across further education and skills, IfL has a large number of members who teach young and adult offenders. IfL will share the Alliance's important report widely with our membership. It supports teachers' central role in achieving the ambitions for broad and high-quality learning provision and qualifications that genuinely create career options for offenders when they put prison behind them."



John Brenchley, Head of Learning and Skills Group, OCR

"On OCR's behalf I am delighted to be a member of the Prisoner Learning Alliance and to have contributed to this important piece of work. In OCR we see so much good practice in prisons despite their constraints, and think "if only this could be replicated in just another ten prisons". We are also aware of the attitudinal and systemic barriers to effective practice for those working in difficult circumstances, and support the report's attempts to address them realistically. It's been put together using real front-line experience and expertise, and warrants serious attention at every level in the criminal justice system. I hope we can all look back in a year or two and identify the range of improvements that it has triggered."



Charlotte Weinberg, Chief Executive, Safe Ground

"Safe Ground is very happy to sit on the PLA. The vital policy implication of learning as a cultural issue rather than a simply vocational or functional set of activities is really central to our work. The PLA has brought together a diverse set of perspectives to create and develop a blueprint for very practical application- any institution can begin to embed learning across its entire structure, enriching the lives of not only people using the institution (in this case, people in prison); but also, and just as importantly, the people who work there. This report is an important step in sharing our thinking and encouraging policy makers, practitioners, Governors, Directors and learners to continue to value and promote the range of educational opportunities, including family and arts learning, throughout the Prison System."



Max Tucker, Assistant Programme Manager, User Voice

“So often consultations and alliances engage with everyone except the group that has the lived experience and knowledge of the system. For this reason it was refreshing that the PLA invited me through User Voice to be part of the alliance and represent others like me who have been through prison and experienced prison learning, giving us a voice in its reform. I hope that, if nothing else, the learner voice continues to be a central part of the development of prison learning. Only in this way will we ensure that it really meets the needs of future learners.”



Mark Blake, Black Training and Enterprise Group

“The all too pervasive feeling you get with the criminal justice and penal systems is that they are in existence to keep themselves in existence! This report offers a glimpse into a different reality for our justice system and society putting the needs of the prisoner at the heart of the process rather than institutions, professionals and processes. At BTEG we’re keen to see improved outcomes for all people entering prison and the development of better alternatives and prevention. But we are particularly concerned with the growing proportion of people from Black Asian and minority ethnic groups within the prison system. I think it’s quite crucial that organisations involved in developing alternatives to the current methods engage in the wider public debate around justice and punishment. The British public need to know that there are real alternatives that can support rehabilitation which is far better for the individual and for society.”

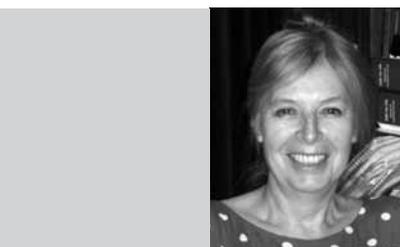
Christine Fisher, Centre for International Prison Studies, University of Essex

“A human rights approach to prison management demands that authorities provide opportunities for prisoners to change and develop, providing a balanced programme of activities to maintain and improve their intellectual and social functioning. This is not an optional extra, but is indeed central to the whole concept of using the period in prison as an opportunity for prisoners to re-order their lives in a positive manner. The PLA is ensuring that this is an informed debate about the provision.”



Rod Clark, Chief Executive, Prisoners Education Trust

“We are delighted at PET to support the PLA. Education transforms lives. We need to invest in learning for the benefit of individuals, families and the security of our communities. We know that from our day-to-day contact with learners and from a wealth of research. Organisations that work in education in prison can come together through the PLA to make that case for learning. This report gives them a voice.”



Dr. Jane Hurry, Co-Director of Centre for Education in the Criminal Justice System, Institute of Education

“The PLA is making an excellent contribution in pulling together the knowledge and perspectives of key players working in prisoner education. The report has captured the results, providing a sound resource for future planning and action”.



Michala Robertson, Assistant Director, Widening Access and Success Service, Open University

“In a recent Open University Offender Learning Consultation Lunch attended by PLA members and others an Open University offender learner spoke of his learning experience with the OU and demonstrated that not only does learning work but that it directly produces rehabilitation outcomes. The student spoke of how the planning, time management and thinking skills involved in undertaking an OU distance learning higher education qualification in prison had directly contributed to his ability to secure accommodation, a job, a volunteer position to complement his degree and to successfully taking and passing his driving test all within three weeks of release. For me this shows the true value of smart rehabilitation”.

Juliet Hope, CEO, Startup

“Startup is privileged to be part of the PLA and to be able to make a contribution to such an important enquiry and its recommendations. As Startup’s focus is on reducing re-offending rates through self-employment, it has been particularly worthwhile to work with the group on seeing how support can best be given to a learner in prison and followed through on release.”

Kieron Tilley, Director of Operations, Prison Radio Association

"The PRA welcomed the opportunity to be involved in the Prisoner Learning Alliance. This report argues a clear case for learning to be placed at the heart of the rehabilitation process. Learning is a crucial and fundamental element in reducing reoffending and National Prison Radio contributes to a culture of learning across the prison estate by sharing information and promoting education in an engaging and inclusive way to listeners."

**Rachel Halford, Director, Women in Prison**

'The real value of the Prisoner Learning Alliance for WIP, and most importantly the women affected by the criminal justice system, was that by putting the learner at the centre of our thinking and drawing on the different expertise and experience in the group, we were able to look beyond the existing provision and think radically about the future of learning in prisons. I look forward to seeing these innovative recommendations become practice and the benefit that will have on women who are in prison.'

**Chris Winter, Managing and Operations Director, Care First (an Independent Training Provider for adults with learning difficulties, learning disabilities, challenging behaviour, mental health and or autistic spectrum disorder)**

"The report highlights that learning is a complicated and continuous process. Because many prisoners learn differently they need to be supported in a more personalised way. Improving personal development and self esteem may lead to better engagement in informal learning before any hard learning outcomes can be achieved. We should not lose sight of this when we are creating a learning culture both inside and on release. In our case, practical help by supporting ex-offenders in volunteering opportunities has helped many people to improve their confidence, overcome their difficulties and move forward."

**Paul Warner, Director of Employment and Skills, Association of Employment and Learning Providers**

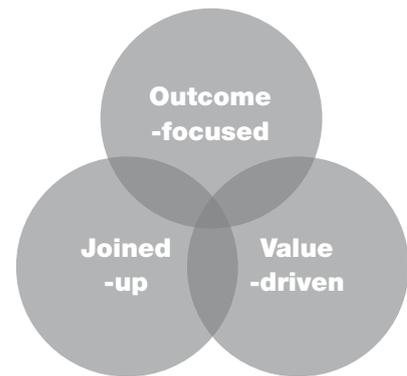
"AELP is delighted to be part of the Prisoner Learning Alliance, which is leading the way on important work to ensure that the learning process that begins whilst in custody can align properly with opportunities for learning and employment outside the gate. The rehabilitation of offenders is of prime importance on a social and economic level, alongside its far-reaching and positive implications on individual lives, and this comprehensive report is a timely and significant contribution to this process."

**Sarah Turvey, Co-founder of Prison Reading Groups, University of Roehampton**

"Learning is about self-development and citizenship. If we want prisoners to become active participants in society, we must foster learning in the widest sense: formal and informal, vocational and expressive, cementing family bonds and community with strangers. Smart Rehabilitation shows clearly how this can be done."

Executive Summary

The Prisoner Learning Alliance (PLA), after consultation with its 16 members and over 50 teachers, prisoners, ex-prisoners, Governors, officers and other stakeholders, have developed a set of three key principles for the future of prisoner learning. At this time of unprecedented change in the Criminal Justice System, it is important for government departments and other stakeholders to keep these key principles in mind. Prisoner learning should be; outcome-focused, joined-up and value-driven. The PLA makes 17 recommendations for how to achieve this.



Outcome-focused:

1. **Learning works and should therefore be at the heart of both the youth and adult estate.** There is evidence that prisoner learning can contribute to rehabilitation outcomes. Learning is as important for most adult prisoners' rehabilitation as it is for young people. *See page 10*
2. **There should be a broad vision of successful rehabilitation outcomes for learning.** Learning outcomes in prison should focus on giving prisoners the ability to cope with life in and out of prison (resilience), the ability to desist from offending (desistance) and the ability to make a positive contribution to their family and community. These outcomes may encompass, but go far beyond, helping a prisoner have a job on release. *See page 12*
3. **When it comes to 'employability skills', a broader understanding is required to improve rehabilitation outcomes, including both becoming a valued employee and self-employment.** 'Employability skills' are often narrowly identified with learning skills for a particular occupation, basic literacy and numeracy or CV writing. True 'employability skills' sought by employers encompass much wider capability in self belief, resilience and ability to work with others that are best promoted by a wider vision of learning. Where occupational skills are required, higher level or niche skills are more valued by employers and are helpful in securing sustainable careers in an increasingly competitive jobs market. *See page 14*
4. **Prisoner learning should focus on rehabilitation outcomes and not outputs.** A focus on outputs e.g. numbers of accreditations or hours of teaching, can lead to perverse outcomes and deflects attention from the end rehabilitation outcomes that learning can achieve. *See page 17*
5. **A 'whole person' approach to learning is needed to achieve the desired rehabilitation outcomes.** Prisons should provide a range and combination of learning opportunities to develop 'the whole person'; their human capital, social capital and imaginative capital. Such learning will need to form a 'package' of learning which could include; informal, academic, vocational, relationship, life skills, creative, peer to peer and e-learning. *See page 19*

Joined-up:

6. **Improved co-ordination between government departments.** Prisoner learning is impacted by policies from multiple departments; BIS, MoJ, DoE, DWP, DCLG, Home Office and the Treasury. This is a time of unprecedented change; recent policies from each of these departments have the potential to conflict. Urgent consideration is needed of how these policies can be joined up in order to achieve positive rehabilitation outcomes. In order to achieve the best outcomes and value for money, policies should be co-ordinated and outcome targets aligned. Parliament should consider how best it can ensure that there is scrutiny of these different government departments and how effectively they work together to achieve overall rehabilitation outcomes. *See page 23*
7. **Improved co-ordination within individual prisons.** There are a range of stakeholders in prisons involved with delivering and funding learning. Education is often siloed from other learning and from broader 'reducing reoffending' work. Successful prisons have a strong culture of learning. Plans made by different prison departments relating to a prisoner should align towards the same rehabilitation outcomes. All learning should be recorded in one place. *See page 28*
8. **Improved co-ordination between different prisons.** Co-ordination between prisons is vital to minimise disruption to learning. This is urgent given the changes to the prison estate in order to ensure smooth transitions between resettlement and non-resettlement prisons and through the gate. Mechanisms for sharing good practice between prisons needs to improve in order to increase efficiency and achieve better outcomes. *See page 29*
9. **Improved co-ordination between prisons and the community.** Most prisoners will leave prison and return to their communities and families. Learning should be part of resettlement plans including support to access learning after release, family learning and relationship skills. Stakeholders in the community should work closely with prisons and education providers to ensure the learning offer in custody will help lead to the desired rehabilitation outcomes after release. Initiatives working with 'troubled families' should work holistically with the parent in prison to improve whole family outcomes. *See page 31*
10. **Clear leadership, management and accountability for achieving outcomes.** Given the diverse range of stakeholders for prisoner learning and rehabilitation, it is vital to have clear lines of accountability in this ever more complex landscape of rehabilitation. Those holding parties to account need the ability to ensure outcomes improve. *See page 32*

Value-driven

11. **Personalised.** Prison populations are diverse and therefore a ‘one size fits all’ approach will not achieve the outcomes desired. Effective inductions and individual learning plans are key to ensuring the prisoner reaches their learning goals and potential. A personalised approach takes time to understand previous learning experiences and achievements and involves thorough assessments of learning levels and types. *See page 34*
12. **Inclusive.** Learning opportunities in prison should be accessible to all prisoners and reflect their diverse needs and motivations. A narrow employability focused model may indirectly exclude some groups of prisoners from learning. An inclusive learning culture also involves officers and staff. *See page 34*
13. **Engaging.** Insufficient numbers prisoners are engaged in learning as a purposeful activity. A prison’s culture and regime must therefore have learning at the heart. Embedded learning and a learning culture can effectively ‘hook’ prisoners to become learners. Responsibility for a learning culture is found at all levels of a prison, from Governor down. What works must trump concerns about ‘public acceptability’ and more must be done to explain to the public why engaging learning will benefit society. *See page 37*
14. **Aspirational.** Once engaged, many prisoners develop a thirst for learning. Prisoners who achieve their basic skills should be enabled to progress with learning to higher levels to reach their potential. Mechanisms to enable progression to happen should be supported. *See page 41*
15. **Safe.** Learning areas such as the education department can be hot spots for tension and violence due to their communal nature. Staff must be supported appropriately in behaviour management. Measures should be taken to ensure staff and prisoners can teach and learn in safety. Safety can be both physical and emotional. A ‘safe space’ to learn is respectful, comfortable, builds on strengths and is motivational. Involving learners in solutions are vital in developing ‘safe spaces’ to learn. *See page 42*
16. **Empowering.** Enabling learners to take responsibility will improve their outcomes, for example through developing learning plans, peer mentoring, service user participation (learner voice) and self-directed learning (as part of a blended learning model). *See page 43*
17. **Excellence.** There should be ‘the best teachers, the best managers and the best advisors’ (Ofsted, 2013). Achieving excellence requires a commitment to Continuing Professional Development of all staff. It also involves partnership working to secure a range of expertise and experience in those delivering learning in prisons including the Community and Voluntary Sector, employers, mainstream education providers, volunteers, prisoners and ex-prisoners. *See page 43*



Methodology

PLA initial thought process

In meetings held in November 2012 and January 2013, the 16 PLA members discussed issues that could be addressed. The PLA members drew on their own experiences and that of their service users. They also drew on issues that had been identified as 'red flags' from the literature including The Learning Prison (RSA), Wings of Learning (Centre for Crime and Justice Studies), Time to Learn (Prison Reform Trust), Brain Cells (Prisoners Education Trust) and HMIP/Ofsted Inspections.

Establishment of three themes

From these discussions, three themes arose and were entitled; beyond employability, learning culture and learning journey. The 16 PLA members divided into three Task and Finish Groups to move forward these areas of work.

Expert Roundtables

Expert roundtables for each theme were organised. Over 50 experts including practitioners, governors, officers, voluntary sector organisations and learners, contributed to informative discussions and shared ideas for improving policy and practice.

Literature review

A detailed review of the research evidence and relevant literature was carried out.

Collecting illustrative case studies and good practice examples

The PLA heard from various prisoner and ex-prisoner learners in the course of the PLA meetings and at the roundtable events. These were collected as illustrative case studies and their suggestions and insights feed into the report findings. The roundtables also highlighted examples of good practice, some of which are found in this report. In spring of 2014 the PLA will host a conference to share more examples of good practice and will pilot ways for this good practice to be collected and shared more widely.

A rapidly changing landscape

During the PLA's first year, the government consulted on major proposals for change to the Criminal Justice System including 'Transforming Rehabilitation' and 'Putting education at the heart of the youth estate'. 2012/13 also saw the introduction and bedding in of phase four of the Offender Learning and Skills Contracts, following the 'Review of Offender Learning'. The benchmarking process across the prison estate has also seen significant cost savings having to be made.

Key principles

The PLA has focused in this report on establishing some key principles for government departments and other stakeholders to keep in mind as the policies are developed and implemented. From the initial three PLA work themes, the PLA have established three key principles. Prisoner learning should be outcome-focused, joined-up and value-driven. The PLA makes 17 recommendations for how to achieve this.

outcome-focused:



Prison image: Family learning at HMP Askham Grange

**Outcome
-focused**

**Joined
-up**

**Value
-driven**

Recommendation 1. Learning works and should therefore be at the heart of both the youth and adult estate.

There is evidence that prisoner learning can contribute to rehabilitation outcomes. Learning is as important for most adult prisoners' rehabilitation as it is for young people.

Putting education at the heart

Earlier this year, the Government put out a consultation promoting the idea of putting education at the heart of the youth estate for prisoners aged 18 and under;

Education is key to our vision. We want to see Secure Colleges providing education in a period of detention, rather than detention with education as an afterthought. It is through education that young offenders will gain the qualifications and skills for employment, as well as come to understand the importance of individual responsibility, self-discipline and self-respect. It is these things that will enable them to engage constructively in society and to lead law-abiding lives. All young people should receive a high quality education that gives them the greatest chance of success. This is just as important, if not more so, for those who have started off in the wrong direction and ended up in custody (MoJ, 2013a).

The PLA welcome a focus on learning (in its broadest sense) in the youth estate and would like to see this approach taken into the adult estate. Many of the arguments made by the government for putting education centre stage in the youth estate, also are appropriate for young people over 18, as well as adults who may have missed out on gaining a full education as a young person.

MoJ SPCR research (Hopkins, 2012):

59% of prisoners reported regularly playing truant.
63% reported having been temporarily excluded from school
42% reported having been permanently excluded.

In 2005/06 in England, the proportion of school pupils permanently excluded from school was less than one per cent (DCSF, 2008, 16).

The benefits of learning are well documented. Although more could be done to develop UK – based research, there is strong evidence of the link between education and positive rehabilitation outcomes, some of which is summarised below. There is much less, if any, evidence for the outcome benefits of other types of purposeful activity such as prison work once the educational impact is discounted. Given the evidence of the beneficial outcomes of learning, education (in its broadest sense) should therefore be at the heart of the youth and adult prison estates.

Summary of evidence

Having a qualification:

- MoJ SPCR (Hopkins, 2012): Prisoners who reported having a qualification were 15% less likely to be reconvicted in the year after release from custody (45% compared with 60%) than those who reported having no qualifications.

Educational interventions:

- NIACE researched interventions including basic education, vocational and apprenticeship training and industrial employment. All the studies suggested that in-prison educational and vocational interventions reduced offending compared with prison alone. Net benefit to the public sector ranged from £2000 to £28000 per prisoner. When victim costs are included in the analysis, the net benefit ranged from £10,5000 to £97,000 per prisoner (NIACE, 2009).
- Rand conducted a meta-analysis of published and unpublished studies in the USA between 1980 – 2011, which examined the relationship between correctional education participation and inmate outcomes, found a reduction in the risk of re-offending of 13 percentage points for those who participate in correctional education programs versus those who don't (Davis et al, 2013).

Employment:

- MoJ SPCR (Hopkins, 2012): For custodial sentences of less than one year, the proven one year reoffending rate was 9.4 % points lower for those who found P45 employment than those who didn't. For sentences longer than one year, one year reoffending rate was 5.6% points lower than those who didn't.
- NOMS Evidence of reducing reoffending (2013): 'Evidence suggests that steady employment – particularly if it offers a sense of achievement, satisfaction or mastery, can support offenders in stopping offending' (MoJ Summary of Evidence on Reducing Reoffending (2013)).

- Analysis by Ipsos MORI and London Economics for BIS: 35% men and 29% of women who had undertaken further education and skills training indicated that they had got a better job, while 18% of men and 12% women indicated they had received a promotion (Dept. BIS, 2013).

Mental health and well being:

- BIS: Chavalier and Feinstein (2005) found that there is a positive effect of education on mental health outcomes and mental illness. The effect of education is greater for mid-level qualifications, for women and for individuals at greater risk of mental illness. They suggest there are substantial returns to education in terms of improved mental health.
- NOMS, (2013): Intermediate outcomes of arts projects “The reviews indicate that arts projects appear to have positive effects with offenders, including improved in-custody behaviour and improved mental health”
- BIS: 82% of people (80% men and 83% women) reported significant gains in self confidence or self-esteem compared to 65% of people who did not complete a course (Dept. BIS, 2013).

Agency, critical thinking skills, attitudes and behaviour:

- Education may influence crime through its effect on patience and risk aversion (Lochner and Moretti, 2004) .
- NOMS (2013) Three studies provide evidence that arts projects may be able to enhance the effectiveness of offending behaviour programmes (Bairn et al, 1999; Blacker, Watson and Beech, 2008; Van Den Broek, Keulen-de Vos and Bernstein, 2011). It may be the case that arts projects can help programmes engage offenders in the process of secondary desistance by encouraging a deeper level of engagement with the material, helping offenders to link the material more directly to their own lives, and facilitating this continued process post-programme.
- Safeground evaluation (Boswell et al, 2011): 90% of participants reported learning how to problem solve.
- Dance United evaluation (Strauss and Miles, 2008) for projects in custody with young offenders: increased confidence and self-awareness; more flexibility and self-control; the capacity to cope with and adapt to challenges; improved communication skills; a willingness to reflect on and address personal strengths and weaknesses; and the ability to transfer learning between contexts.
- User Voice Prison Council Evaluation (2009): The amount of time prisoners spent in segregation units significantly declined from 160 to 47 days.
- Arts Alliance, Re-imagining Futures. (Bilby et al. 2013): The qualitative evaluation of arts projects found that art facilitated reflection leading to changes in self-perception and helped participants positively re-imagine themselves (a key element of the desistance process relating to changes in self-identity)

Family ties and relationships:

- MoJ SPCR (Williams at el. 2012): 54% per cent of SPCR prisoners stated that they had children under the age of 18 at the time they entered prison.
- Learners also indicate the training and qualifications increased their appetite for further learning at a higher level, further reinforcing the possibility of transmitting learning within the family environment across generations. (Dept. BIS, 2012).
- Safeground evaluation (Boswell, 2011): 84% of participants reported improved relationships with their children / families
- Inspiring Change evaluation (Anderson et al, 2011): Benefits were most evident for those whose families attended the performances and shows. They also found numerous instances of enhanced peer relationships.
- H. Nicholls (2013) – Distance learning created shared experiences of learning between prisoner parents and their school aged children – both students, which helped maintain ties.
- Prison Reading Groups (2013): Prisoners’ families can read the same book which then becomes a point of conversation and a shared love of reading is developed. As literacy and analysis skills develop parents can better help children with their homework.

Coping and avoiding ‘prisonisation’

- Nichols (2013); The short term benefits of prison education are extremely important in helping to prevent ‘prisonisation’ (Clemmer, 1940) and increasing their chance of successful resettlement. Education can provide a coping strategy (Hughes, 2012). People need to be able to cope with the experience of life in modern society, particularly after release from a long sentence (Champion & Edgar, 2013).
- Pike (unpublished PhD); Initial findings suggest higher level learning provides a resilience factor which helps ex-prisoners cope with and overcome barriers to resettlement.
- Dr. Ben Crewe; currently carrying out research on long sentenced prisoners, early findings suggest that learning plays an important part in developing a psychological goal.
- Safety and purposeful activity are two elements of a ‘healthy prison’ inspected by HMIP. As the HMIP annual report for 2012 indicates, self harm amongst men had increased to over 16,000 incidents per year and there were 50 suicides. The same report also commented that ‘in local prisons we found that the time prisoners spent out of their cells had declined dramatically as association was reduced and prisoners were locked up earlier in the day’ (HMIP, 2012).

Recommendation 2. There should be a broad vision of successful rehabilitation outcomes for learning.

Learning outcomes in prison should focus on giving prisoners the ability to cope with life in and out of prison (resilience), the ability to desist from offending (desistance) and the ability to make a positive contribution to their family and community. These outcomes may encompass, but go far beyond, helping a prisoner have a job on release.

Re-framing the purpose of prison education

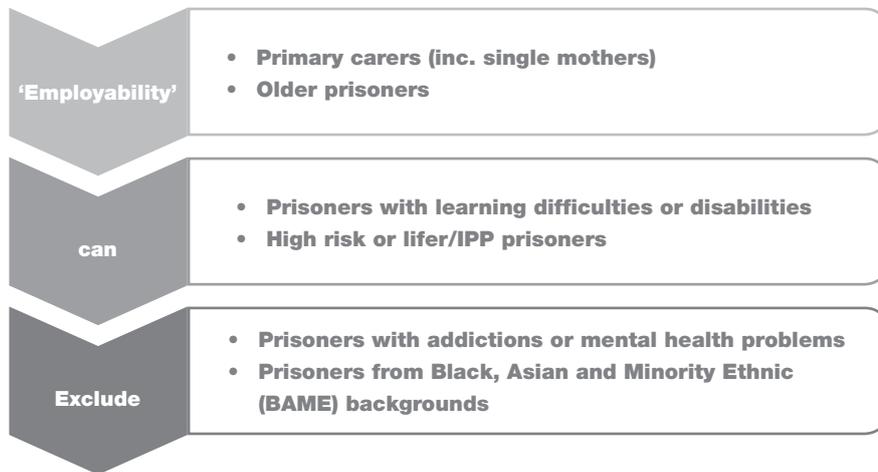
PLA members represent organisations that provide a wide variety of types of learning in prison including academic, vocational, creative, peer-led and informal. In this report ‘learning in prison’ is defined broadly. Therefore the PLA feel it is important, and timely, to re-frame the discussion about the purpose of learning in prison to ensure governmental outcomes reflect the wide ranging rehabilitation benefits of learning. Narrowing the purpose towards a sole outcome of ‘employment’ detracts from other successful outcomes learning can lead towards including;

- the ability to cope with life in and out of prison (Resilience)
- the ability to desist from offending (Primary desistance / reducing re-offending)
- the ability to make a positive and sustained contribution to their family and society which can include work, but also family life, parenting, volunteering, mentoring, studying etc. (Secondary desistance – ‘the pursuit of a positive life’)



Why re-frame the purpose?

A broader vision of successful rehabilitation outcomes is necessary in order for the best value to be made of investment in prison education. A broader vision would also avoid excluding some groups of prisoners from accessing learning. For many prisoners, help towards having a job is a major goal and motivator. But those who might be excluded from learning with a sole focus on employment include:



‘Never too old to learn’ Prisoners Education Trust survey of older prisoners, evidence submitted to Justice Select Committee Enquiry (2013):

“ *‘The new education contract actively works against older prisoners.’ (Age not given)*

‘Older prisoners are often looking for recreational learning to keep their mind stimulated, not to enhance their chance of employment when released.’ (Age 67)

‘The focus on employability impacts negatively on older prisoners, programmes are ‘lower-skill’ based and nothing is provided for those who already have employment experience and qualifications.’ (Age not given) **”**

MoJ SPCR research (Hopkins, 2012): Women were less likely to consider having a job important in stopping reoffending than men (58% compared with 69%).

Clinks ‘Double Trouble’ (Jacobson et al, 2010):

A substantial minority of the (ex-) prisoner respondents – talked about racism in wider society and its impact on the resettlement process, including gaining employment; an impact that is heightened by the dual nature of the discrimination faced by BAME offenders (referred to as ‘double trouble’ by one respondent). This latter group of respondents largely comprised black and mixed race men, whose complaints of discrimination tended to focus on stereotyping.

It was also suggested that in the current economic climate, especially with the additional barrier of having a criminal conviction, employment may be perceived as unrealistic or a long way off for many prisoners. Despite this, there are many other benefits to learning. Therefore ‘framing’ prison education as a means to achieve broader rehabilitation outcomes is vital if learning is to have that wider rehabilitative impact.

**The wider benefits of learning in prison
Reducing Reoffending Pathways**

PLA members highlighted the seven ‘reducing re-offending pathways’ and pointed to evidence that learning in prison often has benefits that span several of those pathways, such as improving family ties, mental health, recovery from addiction and attitudes, thinking and behaviour.

Desistance principles

Others highlighted the clear links to both primary and secondary desistance (McNeill et al. 2011); such as positive self identity, hooks for change, social capital, agency and an opportunity to ‘give back’.

Interventions that contribute towards the desistance process are central to the NOMS Commissioning Intentions (2012) and therefore should also be central to the Offender Learning and Skills Service commissioning process.

Resilience / coping

At the expert roundtable we heard research evidence about the importance of learning, particularly for longer sentenced prisoners, as a coping strategy and to prevent ‘prisonisation’. Coping after release with all the barriers to resettlement is also a valuable benefit of learning.

Case studies

The PLA heard from several prisoner and ex-prisoner learners both in meetings and at the expert roundtables. Their powerful stories of success highlight the much wider benefits of learning in prison and the role it played in them coping, desisting from crime and making a positive contribution. Their learning journeys are illustrated throughout this report, but two extracts from ex-prisoners who gave evidence at PLA meetings are particularly poignant:

Frank

At a PLA meeting Frank explained “I was 42 years old, back behind bars and realised I needed to make a change. I decided to get some education. I didn’t know how to write a letter or to have a proper social conversation. I didn’t think that education was going to lead to a job, I just wanted to empower myself – the job was secondary. Education doesn’t ask you to do anything, there’s no machoism in it. It allowed me to be my own man and grow and develop.

The upshot of it has been I haven’t been back to prison, which is enough by itself. I’ve had quite a few jobs, but that’s not the main factor. In terms of what learning has done for me – I’ve always been a taker but now I’m a giver to family; I have sons and grandchildren. I also give to the wider community through the mentoring I do.

For me that goes beyond the job. We all need to pay bills, but it’s allowed me to join in society and to give something genuinely back. All those things I relate directly back to education. I used to wake up in the morning and think where am I going to find the money to sleep somewhere tonight or to get drugs. That was thinking about myself. I find myself now waking up and thinking about refugees on the border of Syria and what can I do about it. Maybe I can’t do anything but I’m thinking about it, which is totally different from before when I only thought about myself. So education goes much beyond getting a job”.



NICOLLE

In a letter to PET for a distance learning course she wrote “I just want to keep bettering myself so I can live a life free from drugs and crime. That’s why I need your help. I need this chance to better myself and move forward with my life. I’ve got a beautiful ten year old son who lives with my mother and father but due to my active addiction he lost me. I know without working on myself, and bettering myself and working on my recovery daily I can’t be that mother he needs and wants. I need to keep pushing forth to achieve my goals”.

At a PLA meeting Nicolle told us about the benefits of learning for her: “I got an IPP in 07, I was battling with addiction and in a domestic violence relationship and this led me to lose my son. I knew that something needed to change. A lot of my offending was to pay for things for my son and also my drug addiction. I wanted to do something positive with my sentence. I applied to the RAPt programme and eventually became a peer supporter with RAPt. When I wrote the letter to Prisoners Education Trust to fund a counselling skills course I didn’t have high hopes. I was so happy when I got funding. I didn’t have a lot of education as I got bullied at school. Sometimes when I didn’t want to come out of my cell, teachers would come to my door. It meant a lot and it gave me the confidence and drive to go on. I also loved taking part in a Pimlico Opera which increased my self confidence.

I came out of prison May 2011 – I’d been out 3 weeks when someone asked me to come and work with them setting up a project with probation, which helps young people breaking the cycle out of criminality and addiction. I go into schools and run workshops about addiction, criminality and gangs (I used to be in a gang). I even work with the police.. I never thought I’d say that! I’ve been given an award by the Mayor for my volunteering.

I’m still continuing in education as I’m doing a Level 3 NVQ in Health and Social Care at a local college so I can eventually get paid work in this field. Education has also brought me and my son closer together. My son’s doing very well by getting all A’s and B’s at school. We sit together and do our homework side by side and support each other”.

Case study continued on page 32

Benefits ‘beyond employability’:

Therefore the purpose of prison education should be re-framed in terms of its wider rehabilitation outcomes. In 2005 the Education and Skills Committee, looking at prison education, came to a similar conclusion:

The purpose of education and training in prisons should be to play a key role in improving the employability of prisoners and therefore contribute to reducing recidivism. However, we would wish the purpose of prison education to be understood in broader terms than just improving the employability of a prisoner. We would emphasise the importance of delivering education also because it is the right thing to do in a civilised society. Education has a value in itself and it is important to develop the person as a whole, not just in terms of the qualifications they hold for employment. The breadth of the education curriculum is important and employability skills should not be emphasised to such an extent that the wider benefits of learning are excluded (p.14).

In emphasising the wider benefits of learning the PLA do not wish to diminish the importance of preparing prisoners for employment and self-employment. Below we set out a the wider definition of the term ‘employability’ to incorporate both ‘occupational/vocational’ skills, along with the ‘soft’ skills that are so vital to both obtain and sustain work. However the PLA would like to see a re-framing of learning in prison to encompass and enable its wider benefits to be achieved. This would bring the outcome focus of learning in line with the stated objectives of ‘Transforming Rehabilitation’; reducing reoffending, as well as HMPS objectives for a ‘healthy prison’.

Recommendation 3. When it comes to ‘employability skills’, a broader understanding is required to improve rehabilitation outcomes, including both becoming a valued employee and self-employment.

‘Employability skills’ are often narrowly identified with learning skills for a particular occupation or basic literacy and numeracy or CV writing. True ‘employability skills’ sought by employers encompass much wider capability in self belief, resilience and ability to work with others that are best promoted by a wider vision of learning. Where occupational skills are given, higher level or niche skills are much more valued by employers and helpful in securing sustainable careers in an increasingly competitive jobs market.

‘Employability skills’ can be interpreted in different ways. As there is no clear definition provided for education providers, it can mean that a narrow interpretation is made including;

- Purely 'occupational skills' such as specific vocational skills – building a brick wall, painting and decorating, personal training skills, cooking etc.
- The skills to secure and perform well in an interview, such as CV writing, job search and interview technique.
- Functional skills; such as literacy, numeracy and IT.
- Prison work; such as laundry, piece work, wing cleaning.
- 'The discipline of getting up in the morning and working a full working day and taking instruction'

The PLA recommend a broader definition of 'employability' is used including;

'Soft skills'

A CfBT report (2011) on Employers Perceptions of Best Practice in Prison Education found that 'Personal skills such as 'a positive attitude' (44 per cent), communication skills (37 per cent), and reliability (34 per cent) are highlighted as the type of skills or attributes applicants most need to demonstrate to prospective employers. Indeed, a positive attitude is deemed as important as having the technical skills to do the job (44 per cent compared with 43 per cent).

Progression to achieve a level of knowledge or skills that employers are looking for and industry – recognised qualifications.

'By 2020, 16 million more jobs will require high level qualifications, while the demand for low skills will drop by 12 million jobs' (Europe 2020 website, cited in Hawley et al, 2013)

A CfBT (2011) report found that 'it is important to note that technical skills remain the fourth most mentioned factor among employers of ex-offenders (after a positive attitude, reliability and communication skills).

MoJ SPCR research (Hopkins, 2012): 47% of the SPCR sample stated that they held no qualifications. In 2003, the proportion of the population of working age in the UK holding no qualifications was 15% (Office for National Statistics, 2003). The higher proportion of prisoners who lack qualifications is important because of the association between qualifications and employment. Government statistics for the general population in 2007 showed that 88% of working age people with a degree were in employment, compared to 47% of those with no qualifications (Office for National Statistics, 2008).

Self-employment - Lloyd's story

Lloyd spent three and a half years in prison. Prior to being inside he describes his life as "spending all my time and effort getting drugs". Addicted to crack and heroin he had lost contact with his partner and their young daughter. Being inside was difficult; "You can get suicidal in prison, it's not the best place to be". But Lloyd knew that he was capable of making more of life. In prison he managed to work through his drug addiction and went on to take advantage of the education courses on offer and studied a distance learning course in Drug, Solvent and Alcohol Abuse counselling funded by Prisoners Education Trust to help him understand more about his addiction. This gave him the knowledge to help himself get free of drugs as it enabled him to understand the cycle of change. It also gave him the communication skills to help other prisoners with their recoveries.

Free from his addiction, he re-established contact with his partner and seven year old daughter. Lloyd regained a sense of his own worth and dared to dream again of things he could do with his life. In the prison library he noticed a leaflet which caught his eye – it was a Startup leaflet offering support. He wrote and received a letter inviting him to attend an Entrepreneur Day at HMP Brixton. At the Entrepreneur Day Lloyd presented his plans for a new company – Bluespot Network. "I wanted to be honest and truthful. I told them that I needed to do a big learning curve... It was a release to be able to present my ideas and be honest about where I had come from, my family history, how long I have been clean." Lloyd's ideas impressed the panel of business judges. They agreed to support him in developing the concept further. It gave Lloyd the break he was looking for to take things forward "I was over the moon".

Startup provided a personal mentor to Lloyd who met with him several times and helped develop a full business plan – "he made me focus on what I wanted to do". There have been challenges; the difficulties of trying to open a bank account with a criminal record were "such a nightmare that it nearly made me throw it all in". But Startup has continued to support Lloyd when he needs it – "They are very hands-on in their support for you". Lloyd's business is now thriving and he feels a sense of pride in what he has achieved. Lloyd has been involved in the development of the Startup website and has run workshops for other Startup service users. He says "I'd love to be a mentor at the end of the day".



NIACE (2012): 'Increased competition between job applicants since the economic downturn has given employers scope to raise their expectations of applicant skills levels for elementary jobs. A report by the Work Foundation (Sissons, 2011) identified how this has led to the displacement of people with skills needs *'The employment rate for those with no qualifications fell markedly during the recession, as competition for entry level posts has become intense, with those leaving relatively more skilled jobs competing for those jobs which are available.'*

(Ofsted, Coffey 2013) 'Targets should be based on prisoners' development of vocational and employment-related skills at level 2 and above and their progression to sustained employment or further training on release'.

If employment is linked to reduced reoffending as a route out of poverty, then the employment must pay a living wage and be sustainable. Skilled jobs pay more than unskilled or routine jobs and are more likely to lead to sustainable careers.

NIACE (2012): 'As a consequence of employers viewing them as 'expendable', many people with very low skills levels can only find short-term, low-paid employment and become trapped in a low-pay, no-pay cycle. The National Audit Office recognised low levels of skills as being a major contributory factor: *'People with low skills levels tend to move into entry-level jobs in high turnover sectors such as retail. These jobs are five times more likely to be temporary compared with all jobs.'*

MoJ SPCR research (Hopkins 2012): On average, SPCR prisoners who had ever worked reported receiving low pay compared with the general working age population in their last job before custody. Sixty-eight per cent thought that 'having a job' was important in stopping reoffending, and 52% thought 'having enough money to support myself' was important in stopping reoffending.

Development of skills that will lead to employment that offers 'a sense of achievement, satisfaction or mastery'

The MoJ Evidence on Reducing Reoffending (2013) says 'evidence suggests that steady employment – particularly if it offers a sense of achievement, satisfaction or mastery, can support offenders in stopping offending' (Uggen and Staff 2001).

MoJ SPCR research (Hopkins, 2012): Nearly half (49%) of SPCR prisoners were classified as working in routine and semi-routine occupations. Only approximately one in twenty (5%) were working in managerial and professional occupations. This compares with 22% and 34% of those aged 16–64 in the UK in 2005 (Office for National Statistics, 2006). This indicates that having a routine or semi-routine job does not necessarily prevent offending.

Niche skills

Labour Market Analysis should not just look at where most of the jobs in the local area are, it should also look at the numbers of people applying for each type of job. Jobs that require niche skills will tend to have less people apply and therefore less competition.

Case Studies:

HMYOI Warren Hill Raptor project has been successful in getting young offenders into work in Birds of Prey centres by offering a niche qualification, practical experience and embedded functional skills.

HMP Lewes has a PICTA academy offering high level ICT qualifications and has successfully placed learners into jobs in the technology industry.

HMP Rochester has a stonemasonry workshop, in partnership with Changing Paths and Kent Probation. There is a skills gap for highly skilled stonemasons so increasing employment prospects.

Self-employment and social enterprise

Employability should also mean, for those who are interested, skills for self-employability. (See case study on p. 15)

Social enterprise

For some who want to become self-employed, they want to combine making a living with giving something back. Support to set up social enterprises should therefore also be considered under the definition of 'employability'.

Graham's story

"I spent 18 years in prison after going into care at twelve years old and being sent to a school for children who had trouble in mainstream education. I went through the criminal justice system and eventually was sentenced to a two-strike life sentence in 2001. At this stage I thought, 'What are my options?' I went through drug rehabilitation and was clean by 2002. My drugs counsellor from RAPt encouraged me to take on education, which I'd always seen as boring and authoritarian. Within 6 months, I had passed level 2 numeracy and literacy and getting those certificates was better than any drug I'd taken.



During my time in custody I did 5 or 6 distance learning courses, including with the Open University, funded by PET. I became an education addict and found I enjoyed it and was quite good at it. The OU was the first deadline I ever met and sat alongside my sense of responsibility as a father. Learning says far more about a person than just knowledge.

Around 2007 I decided I wanted to set up a social enterprise. I worked with the Surrey Youth Justice scheme in prison and using this practical experience and my theoretical education I put together a business plan. I was released in 2009 and started working the next day. I started offering my services to schools and PRUs. Within 7 months, I had established a charity and today we work with 3000 young people a year. My previous experience had shown me that young people who were engaging in risky and criminal behaviour identified with my story – and others like me. Sharing our experiences – and the consequences – proved to be a powerful and productive tool for working with some of the most challenging young people around today. We now employ 7 ex-offenders who all did education. My

charity Youth Empowerment Crime Diversion Scheme works with young people and supports ex-prisoners, working with HMPs East Sutton Park, Blantyre House and Stanford Hill. I got my first payslip through this work. The Kent Police used to hate me but now they welcome me!

On a personal level, it has been amazing to be involved with something so positive and I continue to apply much of the academic learning I gained through my education. Youth Empowerment has very much been driven by research, evidence and academic understanding – something I would not have had the first clue about before. I know the value of learning and about the need to change attitudes. In each institution I was in, I had one person who was a rock in supporting me. However, I always felt I was swimming against the tide, it was a fight. Education wasn't felt to be critical. How do we stop reoffending? Education has worked for most prisoners I know."

Is the Work Programme working for ex-prisoners?

An evaluation of the Work Programme (Centre for Economic and Social Inclusion, 2013) shows that it is not achieving the targets set; (5% into employment, therefore not reaching the 8% target). Therefore a distinct, broader approach to developing 'employability', as described above, is required both in custody and after release. For a more in depth discussion see page 27.

Recommendation 4. Prisoner learning should focus on rehabilitation outcomes and not outputs.

A focus on outputs e.g. numbers of accreditations or hours of teaching, can lead to perverse outcomes and deflects attention from the end rehabilitation outcomes that learning can help achieve.

Outputs can lead to perverse outcomes

Meeting the targets, but missing the point

Although in theory paying by the number of qualifications achieved sounds sensible, in reality it can lead to perverse outcomes and a 'bums on seats' or 'tick-box' culture. In one of the expert roundtables, prison teachers told us that often in their class students had not elected to come to their class, but were placed there as there was a free space. This can result in class disruption as not everyone in the class wants to be there and can disrupt learning for those that do. It can also lead to an incentive to get prisoners to do qualifications even if they have a higher level of qualification already (creaming) or replicating courses that have been done in a previous prison.

‘Prison qualifications’

Another perverse outcome is the result that prisoners end up with a large number of ‘bite size’ accreditations at a low level, but do not have the opportunity to progress (known as ‘qualification stacking’). As one young person said in a focus group about changes to the youth estate; ‘I’ve done ten level one qualifications since I’ve been here, in that time I could have progressed up to a level two or even level three’. The PLA received feedback from prisoner learners at the roundtables that there was a perception that the push for accrediting courses led to less meaningful qualifications, what the prisoners called ‘prison qualifications’, rather than better, employer recognised qualifications like GCSEs, A-levels, NVQs and BTecs.

Accrediting informal learning

Another perverse outcome of focusing on accreditation is the incentive to accredit for the sake of it, despite some learning benefiting from being delivered in an informal and non-accredited way. The OLASS 4 contracts and funding mechanisms have a set amount, approximately 12%, for Personal and Social development. This type of learning is defined as informal and therefore does not need to be accredited. However, the specification states ‘Where possible, the learning should be accredited where suitable qualifications exist’. Engaging learners through informal learning could be lost with an over emphasis on the accreditation rather than the rehabilitation outcome.

Given the small proportion of Skills Funding Agency money for Personal Social Development, non accredited learning, as well as the push for accreditations, this can lead to the perverse result that engagement and motivational activities can be side-lined.

Intermediate and absolute outcomes

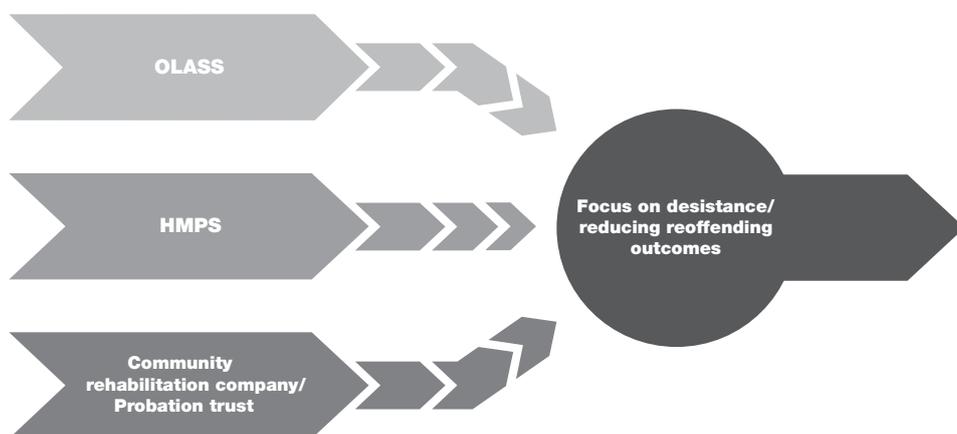
PLA member Safe Ground has highlighted the need to look at an outcome-based model of prison learning in terms of ‘distance travelled’ i.e. intermediate or incremental measures along the process towards absolute measures such as lack of reconviction, obtaining qualifications or gaining employment;

Understanding the value of incremental measures (Safe Ground)

Incremental (soft) outcomes can be understood as the intermediate outcomes that are achieved along the route to attaining the ultimate goal. For example, in the case of an unemployed person getting into work, incremental outcomes might include increased confidence or a change in attitude. This way of conceptualising outcomes takes us away from the hard/soft dichotomy of measures and enables us to recognise and value the critical contribution of incremental outcomes (e.g. improved self-esteem) in the achievement of such goals that can be measured in absolute terms (e.g. qualifications achieved).

This aspect of work with offenders needs to be acknowledged as a vital element in progression routes to engagement and ultimately, employment and the reduction of reoffending. Therefore, Safe Ground suggests that instead of reference to hard and soft outcomes, we think in terms of incremental and absolute measures.

The PLA therefore recommends learning in prison should focus on rehabilitation outcomes (coping with prison and after release, desisting from crime and making a positive contribution to family and society) – and the intermediate or incremental steps towards these outcomes, rather than outputs such as numbers of accreditations. Ensuring all stakeholders are focused on these rehabilitation outcomes would help reduce the perverse incentives discussed above and will help the Community Rehabilitation Companies and Probation Trusts to achieve their reducing reoffending outcomes.



Recommendation 5. A ‘whole person’ approach to learning is needed to achieve desired rehabilitation outcomes.

Prisons should provide a range and combination of learning opportunities to develop ‘the whole person’, their human capital, social capital and imaginative capital. Such learning will need to form a ‘package’ of learning which could include: informal, academic, vocational, relationship, life skills, creative, peer to peer and e-learning.

As one prisoner the PLA heard from so eloquently said:

“If you want a well rounded individual returning into society, you have to give them well rounded experiences, things that allow you to connect back into the community.”

In order to achieve the rehabilitation and intermediate outcomes described above, a ‘whole person approach’ to learning in prison is needed. A whole person approach encompasses both ‘human capital’, ‘social capital’ and ‘imaginative capital’.

	Human Capital	Social Capital	Imaginative Capital
Focus	Individual	Family and Networks	Individual Imagination
Indicator	Knowledge, skills and competencies, and other attributes	Norms, values and attitudes	The growth of the self: reflection and thinking, crucially about other situations and other people.
Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Skills and knowledge • Self-awareness and reflection • Open and honest communication • Concentration • Engagement • Independence • Self motivation • Willingness to try new things 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responsibility • Accountability • Participation and engagement • Sharing and cooperation • Inter-dependence • Positive attitude to change • Trust and openness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding about own situation • Thinking about others • Development of empathy and appropriate responses • Learning to think about and care about someone else

(Adapted from Safeground (2011), Prison Reading Groups (2013) and Lifelong Learning by Schuller, (2009)).

A ‘package’ of learning

In order to give a prisoner a ‘well rounded experience’ of learning, there needs to be an approach based on a ‘package’ of learning, rather than just a one dimensional approach.

Human Capital

A prisoner who wants to become a self employed personal trainer would need a package of learning to develop their human capital ‘knowledge, skills and aptitudes’: vocational skills, embedded functional skills, business enterprise training, web design and marketing, financial management, communication skills, self-discipline/self-confidence and possibly other life skills like the driving theory test. Academic, vocational and embedded skills training can develop knowledge and skills. Self directed learning such as distance learning and e-learning can build self discipline and self-motivation. Peer learning, peer roles and creative/informal learning can develop communication skills. Life skills such as driving, cooking, budgeting etc can be developed through practical or e-learning courses.

Social Capital

A ‘whole person’ approach includes thinking about their other ‘roles’, outside of a work-context, perhaps as a partner, parent, carer or within a peer-group. It might also be as a tenant, neighbour or citizen. Learning focusing on personal and social development within these other ‘roles’ is important to improve rehabilitation outcomes. A prisoner needs to be seen within a holistic context of social relationships and be given opportunities to learn to improve their ability to engage positively with these groups. Therefore as well as looking at learning for employment, learning to engage with others, whether strangers, friends or family, is key. This resonates with desistance principles that prioritise relationships and social capital (McNeill, 2011).

Case study of a 'whole person' approach to learning

Tanweer completed his education at school, however left with just two GCSEs. When Tanweer was sent to prison as an adult he decided he wanted to learn and develop skills which would enable him to plan for his future and develop a career post-release.

1) Human Capital: Knowledge, Skills and Attributes

Functional Skills: Tanweer completed a number of different courses provided by the prison education department including; English and Maths Level 2, IT levels 1 and 2 and an Arabic class.

Vocational Technical Skills: To develop his practical skills Tanweer undertook extensive hairdressing training within the prison alongside a level 2 City and Guilds Barbering qualification, which he successfully completed.

Business knowledge: With a view to starting as business as a self employed hairdresser and barber, Tanweer completed distance learning courses in Personal Finance, Investigating Entrepreneurial Opportunities and Professional Communication as well as an OU Openings course and certificate in Business Studies, funded by Prisoners Education Trust. This also taught him self-discipline and time management.

2) Social Capital: Networks and relationships

Mentoring and Rep: Tanweer went on to become a learning assistant in the class, where he supported the tutor and other learners to gain their barbering qualifications. He also became a Toe-by-Toe mentor for the Shannon Trust where he helped other prisoners learn to read and write through structured one-to-one sessions. He also became a wing representative and a racial equality representative. All of these positions enabled Tanweer to develop soft skills, which will be hugely important in his future career. He used these communication and social skills to help prevent a fellow prisoner from committing suicide.

3) Imaginative Capital: Reflecting on his journey and planning for the future

Reflection and celebration: In 2012 Tanweer was an Adult Learners Week winner and granted ROTL to attend their prestigious awards event with his children and partner. After winning Tanweer wrote about his experiences which encouraged him to reflect on his journey, the impact on his family and be hopeful for the future. He says, *"learning has transformed my life and that of my family, as I am now in a position to start a career once I leave prison and to financially support my family. Equally, I will be able to give back to, and be part of, society"*.

From Safe Ground: Relationship Skills and Offender Learning (2011):

Effective Relationship Skills enable individuals to develop the capacity to share, listen, care, be proactive and thoughtful and take initiative. They also support the development of resilience and resourcefulness since:

- The ability to relate to self means that one's identity, world view, personal beliefs and values can be clear and robust, thereby helping to establish secure and safe boundaries.
- The ability to relate to others without fear or insecurity means that the world becomes a more open place filled with increasing possibilities, rather than a threatening, intimidating and frightening place where people and situations cause tensions that can lead to aggression.
- Relationship skills enhance life chances and choices and are transferable between family, work, education, community and social environments.

Learning with others in a team or group, peer mentoring/peer support, family learning and taking on roles of responsibility such as student council rep or classroom assistant can promote social capital (Champion & Aguiar, 2013).

Imaginative capital:

From Books behind bars (Prison Reading Groups, 2013):

'In addition to these three sorts of capital [human, social and identity], many prisoners also need to develop what we see as a fourth sort of capital: imaginative capital. This is what a reading group can foster so well. Why is imaginative capital important? It matters because it concerns the growth of the self: reflection and thinking, crucially about other situations and other people. This is often what prisoners need to do. An invitation to invest in imaginative capital proposes that I might be able to understand my own situation better by reading about someone else's. Also, that I may be able to care about someone else; after all, how can I care about you if I never think about you?'

A key theme from the expert roundtables was that reflective learning is vital to a 'whole person' approach. One participant said *"Opportunities to tell their story, learn who they are. Being reflective is so important. Help to figure it out for themselves and then plan for a future self"*. One prisoner who spoke to the PLA said the best learning in prison doesn't just impact the mind, but also impacts the heart. Opportunities to provoke an emotional response from learning is therefore one way to improve rehabilitation outcomes. The arts can provide a useful vehicle for developing imaginative capital and enabling prisoners to find ways to express themselves.

Offending behaviour programmes, such as the Thinking Skills Programme, can start that process, but these skills and reflections need to be practiced and developed over time through ongoing learning opportunities. Family learning, informal learning, peer learning and arts based learning are examples of education that can evoke an emotional response and promotes a reflective experience. NOMS commissioned research recently indicated that there is evidence that arts – based learning can effectively supplement Offending Behaviour Courses (Cited in Burrowes et al. 2013). It could also be useful as a pre-cursor or supplement to other restorative justice approaches.

A 'whole person' approach to learning plans and records

One type of learning or intervention will often not provide the 'cocktail of learning' required to develop a 'well rounded individual' and therefore individual learning plans need to reflect and plan for a range of learning opportunities, sometimes consecutively and other times concurrently. Having a 'learning culture' in a prison, where learning is found 'in every corner', is key to this 'package of learning' approach. Learning record and plans that actively record and plan for a range of learning are vital. Currently learning records only record SFA-funded learning, so learning done through an arts organisation, peer mentoring, distance learning, work-based prison learning is not recorded or planned for in one place. The learning plan and learning record must reflect 'the whole person' approach in order to get the best 'whole person' rehabilitation outcomes.

The PLA heard from a researcher, H. Nicholls, who highlighted that education in prison must be located 'in the human context'. She said *"we need to put education in the human context of their lived experiences, to understand who they really are as people including their experiences of school"*.

Case study - The Bridge Programme at HMP Low Newton

At HMP Low Newton they have a one-week education induction where the women reflect on their early experiences of education, talk through their fears and anxieties, discuss their interests and are helped to think about ambitions and then develop a learning plan. They take time through one to ones and group work to get to know 'the whole person'. This is supported with a visit to the education department and through the help of dedicated peer support workers.

"I learnt all sorts about myself, good things, not all negative which I'm used to hearing"

"I didn't do well at school, this week has built my confidence and motivation".

"When I started I was feeling extremely low. I had lost confidence, self respect and could not see a way forward.. she has shown me I can get control of my life back by setting myself achievable goals".

A similar approach taken by HMP Wandsworth was recently praised by HM Inspector of Prisons (2013):

'The week-long induction into education was innovative as it allowed prisoners to reflect on their personal development needs and set meaningful individual leaning targets. Prisoners could then try out the different education and training courses before selecting the most suitable ones to help them achieve their goals.'

Joined-up:



**Outcome
-focused**

**Joined
-up**

**Value
-driven**

Recommendation 6. Improved Co-ordination between government departments.

Prisoner learning is impacted by policies from multiple departments; BIS, MoJ, DoE, DWP, DCLG and the Treasury. This is a time of unprecedented change; recent policies from each of these departments have the potential to conflict. Urgent consideration is needed of how these policies can be joined up in order to achieve positive rehabilitation outcomes. In order to achieve the best outcomes and value for money, policies should be co-ordinated and outcome targets aligned. Parliament should consider how best it can ensure that there is scrutiny of these different government departments and how effectively they work together to achieve overall rehabilitation outcomes.



A joined-up approach to social justice

The government's One year on report on their Social Justice Strategy (DWP, April 2013) states: *'all too often the most severely disadvantaged individuals lack the systematic, wrap-around support they need to overcome their problems in the long-term... We believe that the most effective way of addressing multiple disadvantage is through joined-up, multi-agency initiatives that seek to address problems in the round, rather than in isolation, delivering sustained outcomes over the long term'*.

One of the social justice strategy key indicators relates to offenders in terms of reducing re-offending and improving employability. Therefore in line with the ambition outlined in this strategy, government departments with an interest in achieving social justice outcomes need to work together to provide holistic 'wrap around' support.

One vital means for this to happen is the ability to share data across departments. For example the Social Justice Strategy one year on report states that *'Because new work is underway to develop a data share between the Department for Work and Pensions, HM Revenue & Customs and the Ministry of Justice it is not yet possible to report on employment outcomes'*. We look forward to seeing the results of this work shortly.

Ministry of Justice and Business, Innovation & Skills

The department with responsibility for 'offender learning' is Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS). Through BIS the Offender Learning and Skills Service (OLASS) contracts are commissioned. OLASS is currently in phase four, with three year contracts having been commissioned starting in summer 2012 to four education providers covering ten OLASS regions. As these contracts will come to an end in summer 2015, a decision will need to be made by BIS whether to extend the contracts or to re-tender. This decision is however impacted by the Transforming Rehabilitation (TR) policies of the Ministry of Justice (MoJ). TR and OLASS policies need to be joined-up if they are to lead to desistance outcomes. Without sufficient co-ordination there is a risk of conflict, described below.

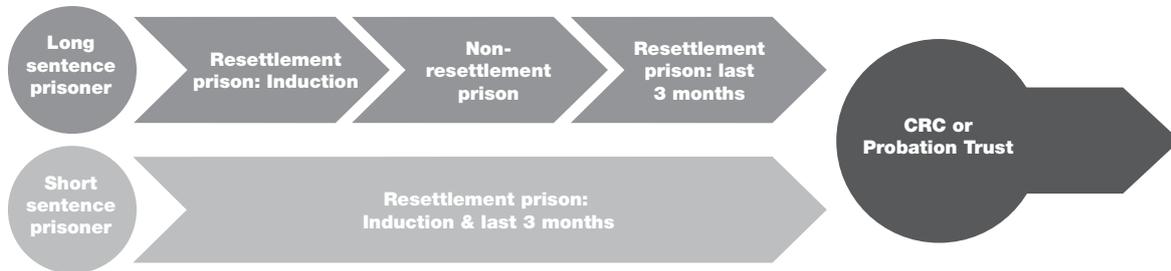
Contract Package Areas v. OLASS regions

TR has divided up England and Wales into 21 Contract Package Areas (CPAs), which do not directly match the ten OLASS areas. This adds an additional layer of complexity to the regional systems and may therefore lead to reduced accountability. This could ultimately lead to detrimental outcomes for the prisoner learners.

Resettlement and non-resettlement prisons

Under TR prisons will be divided into two types; resettlement and non-resettlement prisons. Resettlement prisons are said to be local to where the prisoner will be released. There are 70 resettlement prisons and all women's prisons will be resettlement prisons.

The MoJ state that *'It is envisaged that the creation of resettlement prisons will present opportunities to create better continuity of service for offenders, in relation to wider mainstream and co-commissioned services. For instance, MoJ is testing, with the Department of Health, an 'end-to-end' approach to tackling addiction from custody into the community'*. This 'end to end' approach should also be applied to education and training between the two departments for the benefit of the learner.



It appears that prisoners will start their sentence in a resettlement prison, but if they are serving longer than six months in custody, they will be transferred to a non-resettlement prison, but will return to their resettlement prison three months prior to release. This would mean a shift in curriculum focus for different prisons. OLASS contracts will need to be sufficiently flexible to respond to the differing needs of the two types of prison populations.

- **Resettlement – induction**
Resettlement prisons, being the first port of call for a prisoner, will also need to take a greater role in ensuring there is sufficient induction and assessment processes and to developing a learning plan, as this should then determine which non-resettlement prison a prisoner attends that would best meet their learning needs.
- **Resettlement – short sentenced (less than 12 month sentences, serving 6 months in custody)**
In resettlement prisons education providers will be working with short sentenced prisoners with limited time for learning and competing priorities to sort out other resettlement issues such as accommodation, benefits, children and support for addictions if relevant. However there will also need to be a focus on planning for transition to education, training or employment (ETE) after release.
- **Non-resettlement prison**
In non-resettlement prisons, with longer sentenced prisoners, there may need to be additional flexibility to support distance learning and higher level qualifications to enable progression for those who have time to reach higher levels. Non-resettlement prisons are also likely to be working or training prisons, therefore the contracts will need to enable providers to provide vocational and embedded learning to go alongside work activity.

Non-resettlement prisons may also have more very long sentenced prisoners and therefore will need to ensure that informal and creative learning opportunities are available for those prisoners to be able to cope with their sentences.

There is a danger that due to the focus placed on the beginning and end of the sentence, there is a gap in learning in the middle of the sentence. Time spent in a non-resettlement prison is valuable time to learn knowledge, skills and personal development. If left until a prisoner arrives back at a resettlement prison in the last three months this will be too late and valuable time to be engaged in productive activity, working towards the process of desistance, will have been wasted.

- **Resettlement prisons – short sentenced prisoners and last 3 months**
Longer term prisoners coming back to resettlement prisons at the end of their sentence may have started a course of learning in the non-resettlement prison and therefore require support to complete that course of study and take the appropriate assessment to gain the qualification. In non-resettlement prisons there will be longer-sentenced prisoners providing a more stable population with more time to focus on learning. It is understood that non-resettlement prisons may form specialisms and this may also have an impact on the learning available.

Resettlement prisons will be focused on more practical issues, however short sentenced prisoners and those coming near to the end of their sentences will also require personal, social development type learning, as well as 'life' and 'relationship' skills, into order to help them cope after release. As they near release, learning should empower them to take greater responsibility and agency to prepare them for the community. Sufficient time should be dedicated to plan for and secure opportunities in the community to continue their learning journey, using ROTL where possible to access mainstream provision prior to release.

In order to make the most of the short time available, some learning opportunities should be available at evenings and weekends and in-cell.

OLASS providers and Community Rehabilitation Companies (CRCs)

- Align targets
CRCs, paid by their ability to reduce reoffending, will be interested to work with OLASS providers to ensure the learning in prison is preparing prisoners towards desistance. However currently OLASS providers have no incentive to consider whether the learning and curriculum they provide contributes to desistance. They are encouraged to think about employability, although are paid by numbers of accreditations rather than by outcomes of prisoners entering employment.

As discussed in the first chapter, the Ministry of Justice has stated that there is a ‘complex relationship’ between employment and reducing reoffending and that there are other factors which contribute to the process of desistance. This could therefore lead to conflict between the CRC who will favour a desistance-led approach and the OLASS providers who will favour an accreditation / employability-led approach.

Under current TR arrangements CRCs will not have a say in the education and training provision in non-resettlement prisons. However, what happens in non-resettlement prisons will impact the CRCs’ ability to achieve their reducing reoffending results. If the time in the non-resettlement prison has been used productively, including access to learning, the prisoner in question will be in a better position to prepare for resettlement than a prisoner who has not been engaged in learning. By aligning the focus on rehabilitation outcomes of primary and secondary desistance for both the OLASS provider and CRC, this should enable them to work closer together for the benefit of the prisoner learner whether at a resettlement or non-resettlement prison. Without this, there risks an approach which focuses solely on the final months of a sentence and valuable time earlier in the sentence to engage and progress with learning has been lost.

- Contract length
Another issue is the contract length. Contract length for CRCs will be 7 to 10 years, with the option to extend by up to 3 years. Currently OLASS contracts are for 3 years, with the option to extend. The PLA roundtables heard from practitioners about the disruption caused each time the contracts are re-tendered and the length of time it can take to ‘bed-in’. OLASS providers also told us that the short contract terms can disincentivise investment in capital projects, such as vocational training or social enterprises. Another disadvantage of shorter contract terms is that it prevents the collection of longitudinal data about ‘what works’. This does not matter when the focus is on output measures such as number of accreditations, however if there is a move towards outcome desistance based measures, then shorter contracts will make longitudinal data collection of outcomes more difficult. These considerations must of course be balanced with the need to hold providers to account and therefore if contract terms were lengthened, other strong measures of accountability would need to be in place.

Another concern about the contract length for CRCs is that prisoners who will not be released within that contract term may ‘fall between the gaps’ as CRCs have no incentive to be interested in that prisoner as they will not impact their payment by results. Therefore mechanisms should be in place to ensure longer sentenced prisoners have access to learning, despite not being released within the contract term.

OLASS providers and National Probation Service (NPS)

Under TR prisoners subject to Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) and those who pose highest risk to the public will be managed by the new National Probation Service, rather than by the CRCs. Therefore NPS will need to work more closely with the education provider to ensure that these ‘high risk’ and MAPPA prisoners are able to access appropriate learning.

Given that these prisoners are most likely to find it challenging to find traditional employment, an OLASS approach solely focused on employment is likely to exclude these prisoners. Therefore, as described in chapter one, a ‘whole-person’ and desistance – led approach to learning would be of benefit, for example by ensuring that Offending Behaviour Programmes are combined with appropriate personal and social development and other learning activities to ensure the soft skills / intermediate outcomes are practised and developed over time (NOMS, 2013).

Therefore in formulating sentence plans and learning plans there should be mechanisms to ensure a joined up approach between the NPS and OLASS providers to meet the needs of these prisoners.

Working Prisons

The Ministry of Justice, through ‘One 3 One Solutions’, have an agenda of increasing the volume of ‘work’ into prisons. The ‘One 3 One solutions’ website explains that one of the benefits of work in prisons is to ‘*Extend their skills and collaborate within a team, build their CV and develop self confidence. We have developed the provision of training and qualifications inside prison so that it links to vocational opportunities available outside*’. However the expert roundtables revealed that this is not always the case. In fact many workshops do not offer embedded functional skills or industry-recognised vocational qualification. One participant said that ‘Head of Activities are missing opportunities to embed learning’. Another mentioned that when a new workshop was built in their prison, the promised adjoining classroom was not built, making embedding learning impossible given the noise of the machines.

One working prison told us that work in the low skilled laundry workshop was a direct competition to the education department and reported the workshops taking people at induction straight into the workshops, even if they had learning needs. The working prison agenda may also be detrimental to the MoJ's TR agenda. CRCs, paid for reducing reoffending, may suffer if a prisoner has spent their whole sentence in an unskilled workshop without any opportunity for learning or personal development. There is no available evidence on the reducing reoffending or employability impact of low skilled workshops. The current pay rates, often favouring unskilled work over learning, also provide an additional disincentive to engage in education. Given the long term economic benefit of education, disincentives to engaging in education should be removed.

'Working prisons' and 'learning prisons' can exist together if the government departments co-ordinated these policies, for example by writing into work contracts that prisoners working in industries should also have access to learning opportunities. This could be embedded or by enabling prisoners to work part time and learn part-time. Another option would be to enable them to accumulate 'annual leave' to spend doing learning activities. A culture of learning opportunities outside of the core work day, would better replicate a working day in the community as many people work in the day but have access to learning and educational activities at evenings and weekends to develop them as a 'whole person'. To develop prisoners as 'whole people' a similar approach should be taken.

The Treasury

'Fair and sustainable'

At the same time as all the changes outlined above, and the focus on reducing reoffending, the MoJ are also implementing significant cost savings as part of the 'fair and sustainable' agenda. The PLA heard evidence that this policy was making it harder on the ground to achieve rehabilitation outcomes in custody. Although the MoJ may be making initial savings in the prison estate, if this makes it harder to achieve rehabilitation and desistance outcomes, then the predicted savings as a result of reduced reoffending will not be achieved. Therefore a balance needs to be struck between the two competing policy agendas in order for the economics to add up.

As one expert roundtable participant highlighted *"fair and sustainable is having a huge impact on the different responsibilities and accountabilities within prison education. We need to look at the impact of fair and sustainable on the reorganisation of prison regimes"*.

One Governor who spoke to the PLA said;

"The challenges are cuts in funding, staffing cuts, low staff morale and being expected to do more with less. It is the most difficult time I have experienced in 25 years. I would like a 'utopia' where a high level of education, training and work are available to prisoners, but in reality all we can do is teach prisoners about doing an honest day's work and sticking to a job which involves doing the same tasks each day. With another 5 million being taken out of the budget this year, partnerships are key. We have a contract to repair bed sheets and iron dressing downs. I realise this is low level work, but the contract has an output that can make us a profit".

A prison officer who attended the expert roundtable said *"One of the biggest problems is cutting staff numbers, so it will be difficult to get people to education. If you've got someone on an education course but you can't get them out they will lose interest. It worries me as education is important. With education behind them it's more likely they won't re-offend. If they are serious about reducing reoffending then they can't cut more staff"*.

The PLA were also told about specialist prison officer staff, for example those who provide sports courses in the gym, being moved back onto the wings for generic duties as staff are cut. This reduces the amount of embedded learning and makes learning more siloed to just the education department, reducing the number of potential 'hooks' for learning.

Another participant from the voluntary sector said they had noticed staff cuts making it harder for charities providing learning activities to gain access, sometimes they would arrive but not be allowed in. So even when organisations offer to resource activity from charitable funds, prisons find it difficult to use them. One recommendation was to increase the ability of such organisations to carry keys. One participant prison educator said they relied on input from the voluntary sector to liven up her curriculum *"projects in prisons need to continue so that is the norm. Prison education is really dry – we didn't have their input it would be dire. We need hooks. They shouldn't just come in once a year, it should be regular"*.

A prison teacher told the PLA that due to staffing cuts, association time was being severely restricted, so prisoners were telling her they now had to decide between coming to education or taking a shower. She had learners who valued education and so came to class, but apologised for smelling as they had not washed for several days.

BIS, MoJ and Department for Work and Pensions (DWP)

As discussed in the first chapter, all prisoners now have day one enrolment to the Work Programme which is managed by the DWP. The Work Programme providers are paid an initial fee at the start, then by results related to employment after 26 weeks and then additional payments if sustained for up to 52 weeks. However as discussed in chapter one, the Work Programme

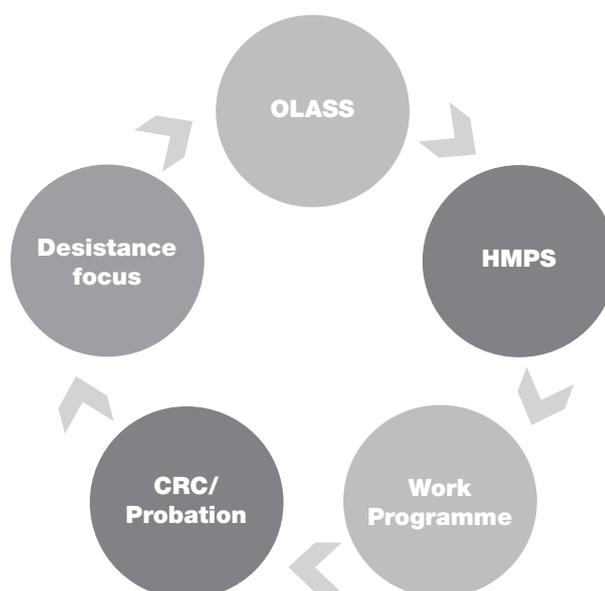
providers have not met their targets set for getting ex-offenders into employment (CESI, 2013). One roundtable participant said “I had a degree in fashion design and did some dress making in prison. After I was released I told the Work Programme that I want to set up my own dress making business. They didn’t offer me any help, they put me to work in a supermarket rather than help me to do a refresher fashion course. It wasn’t until they referred me to Start Up that I got support for my business idea”.

Work Programme providers are also not incentivised to reduce reoffending. Although employment is one aspect of desistance, this could lead to differing approaches between the CRC and the WP provider. For example, a CRC could plan for a service user to go to college to complete a level three qualification, alongside some practical volunteering in the short term to help keep them busy and desist from crime, with the longer term goal of securing employment with ‘skills, mastery or purpose’ that offers a living wage in the long term, that will help sustain desistance. However the WP provider will be incentivised to get that same person into employment, even if it does not involve any ‘skills, mastery or purpose’ or doesn’t lift them out of poverty.

How to improve Work Programme outcomes

The three departments need work together closely to ensure that their policies do not pull in different directions. To improve Work Programme outcomes there needs to be;

- Aligned incentives of OLASS providers, CRCs and WP providers towards desistance. Work Programme providers should receive financial incentives to focus on reducing reoffending, as well as securing employment.
- Better co-ordination between the Work Programme and OLASS providers around curriculum design, considering the broader definition of ‘employability’ defined in chapter one, which incorporates a desistance approach.
- Increased flexibility to decide if the Work Programme is the best course of action for each individual prisoner. For example prisoners who have spent their time in custody preparing for self employment, may benefit instead from going on the ‘New Enterprise Allowance’ programme. Prisoners being released to Wales may benefit instead by going on the Welsh 6 month guaranteed work scheme initially and then the Work Programme.
- Greater accountability and co-ordination to avoid replication; e.g. avoiding a situation where the OLASS provider, CRC and Work Programme all focus on writing CVs and interview technique, rather than focusing on developing knowledge and qualifications and practical experience to give content to a CV and providing opportunities for personal and social development to help with in interviews, to sustain employment and to desist from crime.
- There should also be a greater emphasis on skills development in the Work Programme as recommended by NIACE (2012), which should not impact recipients’ benefits if it is part of an agreed plan.
- Better knowledge sharing and single points of contact: One roundtable participant had developed of a list of ‘single points of contact’ which was made available to different stakeholders in the prison education department and the Work Programme provider to make communication easier. A list of the course curriculums in different prisons was also made available to these stakeholders so prisons and work programme providers knew what courses were being offered where.
- Ability to share data and information between OLASS providers, Work Programme Providers and the National Careers Service (NCS) providers.



Department for Communities and Local Government

The Troubled Families programme is due to expand. MoJ SPCR research found that over a third of prisoners has a convicted relative and other research indicates that ‘the transmission of criminality from parents to children is found to be stronger when the parent is imprisoned (Besemer et al. 2011, Williams et al, 2012). It is likely that many young people in identified as part of a ‘troubled family’ may have a parent who is in custody. As the Troubled Families programme expands, the DCLG should work in a more joined-up way with MoJ and BIS to work with the family and parent in prison in a holistic manner. Currently this data is not collected so it is not clear what the overlap is. By Troubled Family workers, CRCs and OLASS providers working together, positive outcomes for the whole family could be improved. As the Troubled Families programme is expanded consideration should be given to introducing a vulnerability / referral criteria of ‘parent in prison’. For OLASS and CRC providers this might mean facilitating family learning or parenting/relationship – based learning to promote positive outcomes for both the parent and children.

Department for Education and BIS

As prisoners transition from the youth to the adult estate, more co-ordination is necessary to ensure that it is smooth and that the learning journey can effectively continue. The MoJ’s recent consultation on *Transforming Management of Young Adults in Custody* (MoJ, 2013b) deals with arrangements for young prisoners once they reach the age of 18. This consultation has emerged before the Government has responded to the consultation on ‘putting education at the heart of the youth estate’ and is largely silent on the vital question of managing a young person’s learner journey from youth custody to an adult prison environment.

Home Office - Police and Crime Commissioners

There is also potential for the role of Police and Crime Commissioners to be interested at a strategic level in the delivery of rehabilitation and learning in prison and through the gate, as part of their role to help ‘cut crime’ in their communities. The Home Office state that should do this by working ‘*in partnership across a range of agencies at local and national level to ensure there is a unified approach to preventing and reducing crime*’.

As The Revolving Doors Agency recently recommended in their report on Police and Crime Commissioners ‘One Year On’ (Britton, 2013):

‘All PCCs should consider how they can apply an understanding of multiple and complex needs to build a partnership strategy to respond earlier and more effectively to the ‘revolving door’ group in the community.’

Parliamentary scrutiny

Parliament should consider how best it can ensure that there is scrutiny of these different government departments and how effectively they work together to achieve overall rehabilitation outcomes.

The PLA welcomes the Justice Select Committee’s Inquiry entitled ‘Crime reduction policies: a co-ordinated approach?’ and hopes this report will be of help in thinking about the need for a more co-ordinated approach to learning to achieve rehabilitation outcomes.

Recommendation 7. Improved co-ordination within individual prisons.

There are a range of stakeholders in prisons involved with delivering and funding learning. Education is often siloed from other learning and from broader ‘reducing reoffending’ work. Successful prisons have strong cross-departmental, interdisciplinary and multi-agency collaboration and a prison-wide culture of learning. Plans made by different departments relating to a prisoner should align towards the same rehabilitation outcomes. All learning should be recorded in one place.

Cross-departmental, interdisciplinary and multi-agency collaboration

Learning in prison can be delivered and funded by multiple stakeholders. For example;

- OLASS provision funded by the Skills Funding Agency
- Creative, informal or peer-support learning funded by community or voluntary sector organisations
- Work based learning funded by the prison learning budget e.g. industrial cleaning, sports, kitchens or gardens
- Distance learning funded by a charity or a student loan or by the prisoner

This can cause a siloing of ‘education’ as being thought of purely as OLASS provision and an un-coordinated approach for the learner. One roundtable participant recalled that in one prison *“it took an Ofsted inspection for the prison to recognise that education needed to talk to other departments”*.

The expert roundtable also heard from a practitioner who described the induction process for a prisoner who they said would often end up with multiple plans from different stakeholders (sentence plan, education plan, National Careers Service plan etc), none of which linked together, rather than this being looked at holistically. Another participant, who worked across different prisons, said she was shocked that in many prisons there was a lack of multi-disciplinary meetings.

Therefore it is vital that there is more co-ordination between different departments in the prison. This could be facilitated by;

- Structured and regular opportunities for cross departmental, inter-disciplinary and multi-agency collaboration and information sharing, for uniformed and non-uniformed staff
- A joined up approach to sentence and learning planning e.g. OLASS, National Careers Service, HMPS, Offender Management, Community & Voluntary Sector etc. working together at induction
- Sufficient time in induction for a co-ordinated sentence and learning planning approach
- Systems and ICT that facilitate the sharing of information
- Effective accountability and leadership by Governors and Heads of Learning and Skills
- Recording all learning, whoever funded or delivered it, including Community & Voluntary Sector organisations, in one place accessible by all stakeholders
- Ensuring the learner feeds into and can access their learning plan and record
- Learning plans and records capture all learning
- Regular education department tours and 'open days' for prisoners and staff
- Opportunities for uniformed and non-uniformed staff to *"physically join the dots, flow between departments. Hubs where staff and VCS staff can network informally"* such as cross-departmental staff training and events.

One roundtable participant suggested that each prison should have a visual map of all the learning that goes on in the prison in the different departments as *"this will help us get a handle on what learning is going on where in the prison, it needs to be visual and contain contact information"*.

Culture of learning

Successful prisons also have a culture of learning, where all staff understand the value of learning. Developing a learning culture is discussed further in the 'value-driven' chapter.

Importance of design

The shift towards larger prisons holding more prisoners, such as the proposed 'super-prison' in Wrexham holding 2000 prisoners, may exacerbate this problem of silo working. Therefore the design will be crucial to prevent this. Rideout and Wates published a report, 'The Creative Prison' (2006) which looks at the importance of design to facilitate learning. As new prisons or parts of prisons are built, learning should be a strong consideration in the design, for example classrooms to enable embedded learning on wings or by workshops, the location of the library, ICT facilities and education department to maximise use etc.

Again, it is important that saving money through one policy (increasing economies of scale by building bigger prisons and reducing staff ratios) does not end up cancelling out the possible economic benefits of reducing reoffending through effective rehabilitation, including access to learning.

Clear accountability and leadership

As raised by Ofsted (Coffey, 2012) *'The question is, how can we guarantee that prisons provide the best education, training and employment opportunities to equip prisoners for future employment? The answer is clear. A single line of accountability. We are only one year into the cluster arrangements of prisons for contracting providers of offender learning and skills. But I have a real concern about the accountability of the training and education in prisons. It is too complex and needs to be located with the prison governor...If education is not delivering, a long chain of people are involved, so in practice, nothing happens'*.

Therefore to have a co-ordinated approach, not only does there need to be horizontal co-ordination between different departments, but there must be clear leadership and a line of accountability to individual governors to hold to account the increasingly complex matrix of providers and commissioners involved in prisoner learning.

Recommendation 8. Improved co-ordination between different prisons.

Co-ordination between prisons is vital to minimise disruption to learning. This is urgent given the changes to the prison estate in order to ensure smooth transitions between resettlement and non-resettlement prisons and through the gate. Mechanisms for sharing good practice between prisons needs to improve in order to increase efficiency and achieve better outcomes across the prison estate.

Transfers

"I did an IT course in another prison but was transferred before I got the certificate. When I came here I was told I would have to re-do the whole course to get the certificate, even though I'd done it before – I did it twice". Prisoner learner speaking to the PLA

Transfers between prisons have always been disruptive for learners. Prisoners who spoke to the PLA talked about the impact of being transferred before the end of a course or before completing the end of course assessment, and then having to re-do it over again in a new prison – wasting resources. Distance learners can lose books or other course materials. Supportive

relationships, important for desistance, with peers or teachers can then be lost. Prisoners taking specific courses cannot continue if the new prison does not have the same course running. If a prisoner is attending a course at a college of university on ROTL and is then moved away the course cannot be completed. Transfers will also be a barrier to prisoners taking our loans for level three qualifications as a whole class would need to take out loans, but if a student is moved they would not complete the course but would still be liable to pay back the loan.

Transfers should be avoided where possible, unless as part of a planned, co-ordinated approach for the learners benefit. Transfers within a Contract Package Area might be to a different OLASS provider under current plans and so this could increase disruption. However even within an OLASS area, different prisons have different curriculum offers. Therefore more should be done to hold prisoners until they have completed their course of learning or final assessment and to reduce transfers where possible.

Under TR prisoners with longer sentences will transfer at least twice, from a resettlement to non resettlement prison and then back again. Therefore urgent attention needs to be paid to ensuring a smooth transition, through preparation, planning and communication.

When prisoners are transferred it makes it harder for organisations that have been working with a prisoner to contact them to find out the longitudinal impact of their intervention, which restricts evidence gathering about 'what works'. Therefore planning transfers should include informing relevant stakeholders.

Transfers from the resettlement to non-resettlement prisons should where possible be an active choice to a prison which can best meet the learning needs of a prisoner. This will require resettlement prisons to have up to date information about what is on offer in other prisons in order to be able to advise the prisoner appropriately.

Case study

For example this is done already at HMP Doncaster which is a local prison. When carrying out assessments and learning plans, information about the prisons they are likely to go to are shared. If a prisoner for example wants to do rail track, then efforts will be made to transfer them to a prison with that course. If another wants to do IT then they, where possible, are transferred to a prison with a PICTA academy etc. This proactive designation approach is preferable to merely leaving it to fate where they end up.

Record of achievement

One former Governor the PLA spoke to suggested the idea of developing a 'record of achievement' that prisoners could have responsibility for which would record all their learning, both 'hard' and 'soft' skills throughout their sentence, whether through education or other departments. The participants at roundtable where this was discussed were excited by the idea, although it was agreed that the format would need to be suitable to collate all the information and not be lost if transferred to a different prison. One participant suggested that the look of it was important as it would need to be something prisoners would be proud of, enjoy contributing to and use to reflect on their goals and learning journey.

Communities of Practice

The expert roundtables had an unexpected benefit to practitioners attending them – learning about good practice in other prisons. At the expert roundtables, practitioners eagerly shared examples of learning plans that had been successful, ideas for projects such as prisoner produced newsletters and prison wide learning events. Practitioners told us that they lacked these sorts of opportunities to hear about innovative ideas. Even with prisons that are geographically close, it is often the case that practitioners do not know what good practice is happening which they could replicate or learn from.

Re-inventing the wheel wastes time and resources. Mechanisms for Continuing Professional Development and 'communities of practice' between different prisons should be developed to ensure better co-ordination between prisons. A central 'hub' for effective and innovative practice in offender learning should also be developed, on a similar basis to that which is run by the Youth Justice Board.

Competition should not be allowed to get in the way of sharing good practice for the benefit of learners.

Recommendation 9. Improved co-ordination between prisons and the community.

Most prisoners will leave prison and return to their communities and families. Learning should be part of resettlement plans including support to access learning after release, family learning and relationship skills. Stakeholders in the community should work closely with prisons and education providers to ensure the learning offer in custody will lead to the desired rehabilitation outcomes after release. Initiatives working with 'troubled families' should work holistically with the parent in prison to improve whole family outcomes.

Continuing the learning journey after release

The transition between custody and community is an important time in the prisoners learning journey. Plans for this transition should start in plenty of time. CRCs, probation officers and work programme providers should know in advance of a prisoners first appointment the content of their learning plan and where possible should have met the prisoner through the gate to start putting in place necessary arrangements. For example if a prisoner has completed a level two personal trainer course in prison and needs a level three course to secure an interview at a gym (See Meek et al, 2012) then plans should be made before release to line up a college course and funding, as well as relevant work experience for example as a volunteer. If there is a gap between the release date and start of the course then other related activities should be organised to keep the learner motivated to continue their studies.

Other similar examples include if a prisoner has done the theory element of a course and needs to do the practical to complete the qualification or if they have done the course, but need to do the exam at an accredited centre in the community. A smooth transition between custody and community to continue their learning journey requires partnership work, communication and aligned targets based on securing rehabilitation outcomes.

Work Programme providers need to offer a more skills-led approach, as recommended by NIACE. By giving work programme providers and additional incentive to help reduce reoffending, they may be more likely to work with the CRC, OLASS or NPS to ensure continuation of the learning journey. Even if prisoners obtain employment or are looking for employment, CRCs and Probation should still help facilitate continuing learning if appropriate through evening classes, volunteering, access to libraries or informal learning activities through provision of information and through effective partnership working with community learning providers. Not only can learning be an effective distraction activity to occupy time productively, it can offer opportunities for desistance, for example by widening social networks, providing hooks for change and opportunities for finding purpose by giving back.

Through the gate

Resettlement prisons, OLASS providers, CRCs and the National Careers Service should be incentivised to work with local colleges, education providers, charities and universities to promote further and higher education. Visits by community education providers and communication of 'success stories' of prisoners who have continued learning or have gained employment after education, should be promoted.

Case studies:

The PLA heard of example where this is happening, for example HMP Spring Hill work in partnership with Oxford Brookes University widening participation team.

HMP Downview works in partnership with YMCA gyms and Carshalton College. HMP Lewes invite back prisoners who have secured employment to speak to currently serving prisoners.

The Open Book project at Goldsmiths University is run by former prisoners and provides intensive support to other ex-offenders to engage in both informal and then more formal learning.

Improved mechanisms for sharing information and data between agencies in custody and after release would help support a through the gate approach and a smoother transition for the prisoner.

Skills-based welfare

The Work Programme should be amended to ensure ex-prisoners participating in learning and volunteering do not lose their benefits, as evidence shows that employment programmes without combined educational and personal, social development support are not as effective in reducing reoffending (MoJ Analytical Series 2013: A summary of evidence on reducing reoffending).

Nicolle's Case Study cont.

"I have been volunteering, studying and caring for my son. I want to work but with a life licence I know a regular job will be very hard to find. If I can finish off my college course I can be paid for the work I currently do as a volunteer, working with young people at risk of offending. Recently my benefits have been cut as the Job Centre say I'm not available to work due to my study and volunteering. I think I will be more employable after completing my course, so I really don't want to have to give it up as I'm unlikely to find other work, but I don't want to risk getting myself and my son into debt". (see p. 13)

Information

Prisoners in custody should be empowered to do their own research through secure access to the internet via the virtual campus walled garden. There should also be investment in the 'bringonpotential.com' website for prisoners to be able to have a 'one stop shop' website for signposting them to resettlement support including how to continue their learning journey after release. One roundtable participant suggested *"there needs to be a resource available for when you come out of prison, giving information for people interested in getting involved in arts as a hobby or studying after release, where local libraries are, local activities etc"*. Another participant highlighted the need to keep that resource "accessible, local and up-to-date" if it was to be useful.

Family holistic approach

As discussed in chapter one, a whole person approach sees a prisoner or ex-prisoner as part of a network of relationships including family. For a joined up approach between custody and community those social networks are vital. Therefore resettlement planning should involve the family where appropriate and promote family and relationship learning. It is important to continue this from custody to the community as in the community the ex-prisoner will be coming across real life challenging situations either with previous partners or family members or with new partners. Where a child has a parent in custody or released from custody, a family-centred approach may result in better outcomes than professionals working with the parent and child totally in isolation. Where possible there should be a holistic and co-ordinated approach.

Prisoners who have caring responsibilities, should be supported with childcare to enable them to access education, training, volunteering and employment.

Recommendation 10. Clear leadership, management and accountability for achieving outcomes.

Given the diverse range of stakeholders for prisoner learning and rehabilitation, as well as the differing levels of responsibilities, it is vital to have clear lines of accountability in this ever more complex landscape of rehabilitation. Those holding parties to account need the ability to ensure outcomes improve.

Accountability

As provision of rehabilitation services in prison and the community become more complex, it is increasingly important to have clear leadership and a clear line of accountability, particularly as responsibility spans several departments.

Multi-agency working

Multi-agency working at a strategic as well as operational level will be key.

Training

As Governors will have a key role in holding the education and rehabilitation providers to account, they will need to receive sufficient training and support to ensure they do this effectively.

Inspections

Ofsted should have a role in inspecting these arrangements and where they are failing, should be able to follow up with prisons to guide them to improvements, as would happen in a school in the community. However Ofsted only inspect on an infrequent basis and therefore other mechanisms for accountability need to be considered, for example schools and colleges have board of governors. Although the IMB can play this role to an extent, there is not a national approach to their inspections to enable comparisons to be drawn, therefore other mechanisms need to be devised.

value-driven:



Prisoners: Learner Voice, Learning Champions and Peer Mentoring at HMP Elmley

**Outcome
-focused**

**Joined
-up**

**Value
-driven**

Recommendation 11. Personalised.

Prison populations are diverse and therefore a ‘one size fits all’ approach will not achieve the outcomes desired. Inductions and individual learning plans are key to ensuring the prisoner reaches their learning goals and potential. A personalised approach takes time to understand previous learning experiences and achievements and involves thorough assessments of learning levels and types.

Learning plans

The more personalised the learning plan, the more likely the individual needs will be met resulting in better outcomes. Effective planning will become increasingly important in the new regime of resettlement and non-resettlement prisons to ensure that the outcome of reducing reoffending is in mind and planned for from day one, rather than left to the final 3 months of the sentence. In setting up the induction processes in resettlement prisons, time is an important factor to allow for opportunities for reflection, assessment, inspiration, motivation, goal setting and peer support. The planning phase should include the National Careers Service, however the PLA heard at the expert roundtables current NCS provision was often insufficient and too irregular to be helpful. The learning plan should be integrated with other plans including the sentence plan.

The PLA heard from prisoner learners who highlighted the importance of a planned approach:

There’s a real lack of information about prison education early on...you have your induction process but you barely get told about education. You get told what you can and can’t do; not what you might be able to achieve.

The trouble is most people in here are not used to thinking about planning for the long term. They believe there are no opportunities out there for them so what’s the point. But really you might never get this time again to do something positive, to reinvent yourself and plan a different future. No-one ever sat down with me and said, right lets work out a plan.

Individual learning plans were discussed in depth at one expert roundtable, with every prison represented seemingly having a different approach. For some the induction, assessments and learning plan phase of the learning journey was rushed. One roundtable participant described that a new prisoner would have half an hour with education, just long enough to do a basic skills test which the teacher would then ‘eye ball’ before allocating a level and a class – which ever had space. Although the prisoner also had a NCS session, the notes from that session were not provided to the education department and could not be accessed using ICT. When the teacher had asked the class that day who had actually asked to be in her class, only one put their hand up.

However another described that at their prison they had a week-long induction, which explored early experiences of education, fears about learning, a tour of the education department, motivational interviewing and planning teachers and peer mentors. At the prison the attitude was *“an ILP is not just about qualifications, it’s about change. It gives them evidence of their goals and steps to change”*. This programme was funded through PSD funds and is not accredited so the it can be *“adapted to suit the prisoners on an individual basis”*

Use of ‘outreach’ and ‘peer learning mentors’ or ‘learning champions’ at induction and on the wing was also felt to be key to an increased personalised approach.

Support for prisoners at each end of the spectrum should be recognised, by more thorough assessments and support for those with learning difficulties or disabilities, as well as access to higher level qualifications for those who have their basic skills before entering prison or who want to progress while in prison. ICT and distance learning are two ways to increase access to higher level courses. A plan is only as good as the opportunities on offer to develop the identified learning needs.

Recommendation 12. Inclusive.

Learning opportunities in prison should be accessible to all prisoners and reflect their diverse needs and motivations. A purely employability focused model may indirectly exclude some groups of prisoners from learning. An inclusive learning culture also involves officers and staff.

An inclusive learning culture

As described earlier in this report, a purely employment focused prison education offer may have the impact of excluding some groups of prisoners including older prisoners, high risk, those with learning difficulties or disabilities, carers and those for whom

employment is a long way off, for example those who may be suffering from addiction or mental health problems. Therefore education contracts should support an 'inclusive' approach. PLA members described prisons where there was a strong 'learning culture'. One of the key elements of a learning culture was an inclusive approach.

A belief that everyone can learn

One roundtable participant from HMP Parc described how an inclusive learning exists in their prison; *"A senior Governor has a child with special educational needs. She strongly believes that anyone can and should have the opportunity to learn. All the senior managers took that on board and individual officers were also convinced. The whole prison is now on board with learning and reducing re-offending. The education department is everywhere. We use a lot of level 3 trained peer mentors to help with teaching, every prisoner has a learning plan which links to their resettlement plan. The new education unit looks and feels like a college"*.

Celebrating diversity

An inclusive approach is also about celebrating diversity and ensuring all groups of prisoners are encouraged to learn. One roundtable participant from HMP Schotts described building an inclusive learning culture through starting an 'equality and diversity' group who started a prison magazine. Over the months the group and magazine have developed and they have also organised prison-wide events including an event about disability where a disabled man who ran the marathon did some motivational speaking and prisoners were captivated for the hour he spoke. The group has also helped to resolve an issue of bullying about sexuality. By taking an inclusive approach a learning culture has started to develop amongst groups who may not have considered education before.

Women prisoners

NIACE (Dixon & Jones, 2013): Women should have access to a range of learning opportunities, including personal development, qualifications and preparation for work. Learning opportunities should not reinforce gender stereotypes. As well as providing an opportunity for women to complete lower level qualifications, learning should support women's progression to higher levels of learning and skills.

Like the prison population in general, there is not a 'one size fits all' approach to learning for women in prison. The approach taken by HMP Low Newton in the Bridge Project, discussed earlier in the report, will help ensure a personalised and appropriate learning offer is available to women, alongside other interventions. Learner voice activities should also be used to help ensure women prisoners' learning needs are being met, for example at HMP Holloway there is a regular learner forum and the women also produce a newsletter called 'Holla' (see Champion & Aguiar, 2013).

Improving the ability to communicate with family and children can remove barriers to learning for women prisoners. A prison practitioner said: *"If there is trouble at home with the children...it is very hard to get them to focus on their education"*. Opportunities for family learning are also important in helping maintain family ties for women prisoners who are mothers, as women prisoners are more likely to be primary carers than male prisoners.

MoJ SPCR research (Hopkins, 2012) showed that women prisoners were less likely to be employed in the four weeks before custody, and earned less than men prisoners in their last job, despite being equally qualified. Mothers wanting to continue their learning or work after release may need particular support and advice in securing childcare support to enable them to do this.

Courses and work available in prisons can reinforce gendered roles for women. Although beauty, hairdressing and cleaning are what some women prisoners would like to do, others may wish to engage in work or learning such as sports, ICT, the arts, business, manual trades or other subjects. For example HMP Downview had a successful project for women prisoners in partnership with YMCA gyms (see Meek et al, 2012).

Women and Sports-based learning

Principles of best practice in engaging women prisoners in sport and physical activity includes providing a diverse programme of activities, promoting physical and mental health through sport and physical activity as a result of well-developed links between healthcare and gym departments, blending literacy and numeracy into physical education, offering sports based qualifications alongside opportunities to gain work experience in the community, and providing through-the-gate support to establish links with potential employers and community groups. Where such integrated practices were evident, sport and physical education contributed to meeting the complex wellbeing and resettlement needs of women in prison, thus demonstrating the considerable potential of such activities in contributing to the promotion of women's desistance from crime (Meek, 2013).

Given the difficulty of providing a wide range of courses for a limited prison population, mechanisms such as ROTL placements, partnership work, distance learning and imaginative use of ICT could help diversify the curriculum. Community and Voluntary sector organisations who are women-centred can help meet women prisoners specific learning and resettlement needs. In particular they can help create a 'safe space' which is important to women prisoners (see page 42 for case study about Clean Break women – only theatre company).

Prisoners from Black Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) backgrounds

MoJ SPCR (Hopkins, 2012) research found that *'prisoners from a BAME background are likely to be more highly qualified than other prisoners. However, they are potentially likely to need more support in gaining appropriate employment, as they reportedly earned less in their last jobs than prisoners from a non-BAME background – despite being more likely to report having been in employment in the four weeks before custody than prisoners from non-BAME backgrounds, in this study'*.

However as with women prisoners, there is no one-size fits all approach to prisoners from BAME backgrounds. As highlighted in a report by PLA members Clinks and BTEG (Jacobson et al, 2010) *'Research and data by no means presents a homogenous picture of the experiences of BAME offenders. For example, while young black offenders have been found to have a higher reoffending rate than young white people, those from an Asian background consistently have the lowest reoffending rates'*.

HM Chief Inspector of Prisons has stated that prisoners from BAME backgrounds reported generally poorer perceptions of their treatment and conditions than the prison population as a whole. Therefore more research needs to be carried out on their specific learning needs. Listening to learner voice is vital. In prisons diversity reps and staff with diversity roles should be engaged in helping the prison to better understand and find solutions to ensure learning meets the needs of prisoners from BAME backgrounds are being met.

Clinks and BTEG (Jacobson et al, 2010) states that service user involvement is an underutilised resource for developing policies and practices that are responsive to – and resonate with - BAME young men. They highlight the case study of HMP The Mount which was identified as a prison that had scored well in relation to race and ethnicity in its last HMIP inspection and demonstrated the value of service user involvement. Since its last inspection, the prison had developed mechanisms for 'meaningful prisoner representation and consultation' and there was dedicated resettlement and mentoring provision for BAME prisoners.

PLA members BTEG and Clinks (Jacobson et al, 2010) also recommend that:

Voluntary and Community Sector providers may have a critical 'bridging' role to play, by helping to engage offenders who might be mistrustful of statutory services, including probation. VCS organisations are well-placed to:

- Engage BAME offenders whose experience may lead them to be mistrustful of statutory services;
- Deliver culturally sensitive provision;
- Deliver personalised services that are tailored to the needs and circumstances of offenders as individuals and as members of minority ethnic groups.

However they highlight that specific support is required for VCS organisations offering BAME-specific services in the new 'payment by results' landscape.

Learning difficulties and disabilities

An inclusive approach recognises that prisoners learning styles are different and the traditional 'chalk and talk' or 'worksheet' methods for three hours at a time is not going to be suitable for all prisoners. An understanding of learning styles; kinaesthetic, auditory, verbal, logical, social or solitary at the assessment stage and a multi-sensory approach to learning will help include a wider range of learners.

Case study

HMP Lewes library ran an innovative project, in partnership with the National Literacy Trust, flooding the prison with copies of one book, Pigeon English, then organising related events including a Q&A with the author. HMP Lewes when doing their prison-wide book reading event ensured that the book was read out loud on National Prison Radio to ensure prisoners with learning difficulties and disabilities and those with poor literacy skills could be included. Prison officers and staff were also encouraged to participate.

One roundtable participant, who specialises in working with prisoners with learning difficulties, described using a variety of teaching methods and tools including art materials, drama, music and ICT. Roundtable participants also recommended more assessments for learning difficulties and increased use of Easy Read, assistive e-learning technologies and one to one learning support.

A personalised approach to meet their needs is vital. The ability to learn at a suitable and slower pace was recommended by one prisoner who PLA member Care First had worked with. Learner voice activities should ensure that the voices of prisoners with learning difficulties and disabilities are reflected to help understand and remove their barriers to learning.

Prisoners on remand

Speaking to prisoners, the PLA discovered that some prisons do not do enough to engage remand prisoners in learning. Although there are obvious difficulties due to uncertainty about when they will be released, some do spend a long time on remand which is wasted if learning is not an option. They should have opportunities to engage in learning where possible.

One ex-prisoner learner said: *"I was on remand for 18 months and I couldn't do anything constructive. I was left floating around the system"*.

Including staff and officers:

Including staff and officers was also felt to be key to an inclusive learning culture, reflecting the findings in previous research (Braggins & Talbot, 2005). The library is often key in organising events to develop a learning culture for both prisoners and staff, for example the Reading Agency 'Six Book Challenge'. Prison Reading Groups can be found in libraries, healthcare units, vpwings, drugs wings and resettlement units, helping promote learning widely across the prison (Prison Reading Groups, 2013).

Case study

At HMP Parc they have an annual prison-wide arts festival, Hay-in-the-Parc, including inclusive arts projects for example a digital storytelling project for staff and prisoners to discuss the story behind their tattoos, to help find common ground within an informal learning project.

Another participant suggested that an inclusive approach should also include security, as unless there is a dialogue with security, then this can lead to barriers to a learning culture. Others felt that although a Governor and Senior Management Team were crucial to an 'inclusive learning culture', the value of learning needed to be understood by everyone in the prison; administrators, officers, nurses and teachers. One participant commented that *"if we are serious about reducing reoffending then it is everyone's responsibility"*.

Job descriptions

However inclusive learning cultures are too often reliant on individuals going 'over and above' their job description to bring about this approach (Wilson, 2010). One participant said *"we are very lucky at my prison, everyone at the moment is on the ball and committed, but if one of the key people driving it were to leave, then it would change. That is one of the barriers and stumbling blocks to a learning culture"*. The only way to guard against this is to include this type of activity in job descriptions, otherwise it can get lost. For example at HMP Parc there is an 'Arts Interventions Manager' and an 'FE co-ordinator'.

Recommendation 13. Engaging.

Insufficient numbers prisoners are engaged in learning as a purposeful activity. A prison's culture and regime must therefore have learning at the heart. Blockers to a learning culture should be removed. Embedded learning and a learning culture can effectively 'hook' prisoners to become learners. Responsibility for a learning culture is found at all levels of a prison, from Governor down. What works must trump concerns about 'public acceptability' and more work must be done to explain to the public why engaging learning in prison will benefit society.

Culture change - leadership

To improve rehabilitation outcomes, the education department needs to avoid becoming a 'silo'. To encourage more prisoners into learning, there needs to be an engaging learning culture. This will become increasingly important as the prison landscape becomes more complex. Although responsibility for a learning culture is found at all levels, Lead Governors and Heads of Learning and Skills, along with other key leadership roles such as CRCs, Education Managers and Head of Reducing Reoffending, must receive training and support to develop such a culture of engagement in learning throughout the prison estate.

One roundtable participant said *"the over-arching idea from this roundtable is the importance of joining everything up, we need to make connections between learning happening in different parts of the prison, but it won't happen overnight. Someone with clout at the top has to be pushing so that the learning culture spreads throughout the whole prison"*.

Celebration and recognition

Celebrations of learning, such as exhibitions of work and awards ceremonies are also important to an inclusive and engaging learning culture. Having the Governor, staff, prisoners from other parts of the prison and family members attend can help include them in this shared experience and promote engagement.

Case studies:

At Cookham Wood YOI, youth charity Kinetic work with prison staff and the Governor to put together regular awards evenings. These recognise good behaviour and the learning achievements of young people. They also show any films that the film club have produced and refreshments are made by the young people who work in the Kinetic social enterprise café.

The Open University organise graduation ceremonies for their learners where possible. These are often emotional and inspiring events and can be attended by the Governor, staff, family members and other prisoners, as well as Open University staff. The learner can borrow a gown so they look and feel like a graduate. These events often encourage other prisoners to take up education.

Hooks for change

An engaging learning culture is important because there may be prisoners who did not 'opt' for education at the start of their sentence, but this should not mean that other opportunities for learning should not be available throughout their sentence. It may be that a prisoner feels they cannot focus on learning at the start of the sentence or they have other issues to deal with at first, such as getting help with additions or health issues.

The PLA heard from one prisoner who described having a 'moment of discovery'; a realisation that he needed education to empower himself and turn his life around. Another prisoner speaking to the PLA described getting clean from drugs in prison and then being encouraged by their drugs workers to consider learning as a way to help them remain clean. Another described being turned down from parole and using that as a motivation to get involved with distance learning and a theatre project. The prisoner who described it as a 'moment of discovery' said that prisoners are a captive audience and effective engagement opportunities can be used to 'bring forward' these moments of discovery for prisoners.

This reflects desistance theory which talks about 'hooks for change'. Without opportunities 'presenting themselves' through the prison establishment, prisoners could get stuck 'wing cleaning' or in an unskilled workshop for months or even years without learning opportunities being presented, as they 'missed their chance' or fear causing them never to step foot in the education department which reminds them of school.

Case study

One prisoner-led solution at HMP Elmley are 'Learning Champions'; trained prisoners who have special t-shirts and who engage in conversations with prisoners on the wing to promote and impart information about education and learning opportunities.

Every contact counts for a learning culture

There was a strong view that an engaging learning culture was everyone's responsibility and that '*every contact counts*'. A former governor told the PLA of his efforts to establish a 'desistance prison' approach, whereby all staff, uniformed and ununiformed were encouraged to view every contact with a prisoner as an opportunity to promote desistance and encourage them to focus on their rehabilitation, including learning. Training was offered which gave staff information about desistance principles and helped break down the silo mentality.

Learning in every corner

When asked to describe a 'learning culture' one PLA member said 'a prison which has learning in every corner'. A number of examples were given of where this is the case. One of these was HMP Swaleside who attended an expert roundtable.

Case study

One of the ways in which HMP Swaleside has developed an engaging learning culture was due to an individual prisoner who was supported by staff and governors to develop his idea for a wing –based learning initiative called 'Prison Vision'. Each month all wings use the same topic to inspire learning activities including debates, discussions, art, crafts and creative writing. Topics are thought-provoking such as 'ignorance', 'justice' and 'respect'. The wings are decorated each month with the products produced by staff and prisoners on the topic. Prisoners and staff get involved and prisoners are encouraged to discover a love of learning and then take part in more formal education activities.

Swaleside also runs an annual health and wellbeing event, involving their qualified prisoner health trainers and all the prison departments; *"lots of departments don't know about each other so it's a good way of getting them to network"*. HMP Swaleside also have embedded literacy and numeracy in the gym and a classroom with computers to facilitate sport-based learning courses, such as the health trainer qualification and support distance learning fitness courses. This approach can engage 'hard-to-reach' prisoners, including those with learning difficulties:

Case study

Chris was diagnosed with dyslexia in 2006. He could not read or write very well. A psychologist said he had the reading and writing age of a ten year old. In 2009 whilst Chris was in HMP Full Sutton, he started taking English and Maths in the education department as well as taking part in Toe by Toe on the wing. This was a breakthrough for him and he slowly started to progress. Chris was transferred to HMP Swaleside, which is when things really started to happen. The prison offered him a unique learning programme for people with learning difficulties. Lessons were held in a classroom in the gym for no more than six people at a time. Lessons were one hour long, after which Chris was free to use the gym. The extra gym time was a huge bonus and incentive to Chris. Following this programme, Chris has completed level 2 qualifications in English and Maths. It has also allowed him to do the Focus Level 2 Personal Trainer course. Chris is now waiting to start the Focus Level 3 Personal Trainer course, which is the equivalent to an A level.

Chris believes that none of this would have been possible without the type of learning which is available at Swaleside. Chris has now put himself forward to be a support peer tutor in the gym to help other people with dyslexia and learning difficulties who are in the very early stages of learning. Having been through the experience himself, Chris says he is evidence that there are ways of getting people educated that would normally leave prison with nothing and he now wants to help others through that process too.

The benefits of learning in the gym or through arts have been well documented (see for example; Meek, 2012 and Johnson et al, 2011).

The PLA came across examples of learning across prison establishment in the gym, kitchen, garden, workshop, library, healthcare, chapel, resettlement, visits hall, wings, individual cells and in the community. This prison-wide approach helps develop a learning culture. As one PLA member said *"there should be learning in every corner"*. Unfortunately this embedded learning is patchy and can run in isolation from the education department due to different funding mechanisms and the OLASS contract.

Out of scope

The OLASS 4 specification states that it does not include the core areas delivered through the activities listed below, defined as 'out of scope'. These areas include:

- Prescribed Higher Education
- Regime activities including
 - Kitchens
 - Physical Education and Gyms
 - Laundry Services
 - Horticulture
 - Prison Industries
 - Prisons ICT Academy (PICTA)
 - Libraries
 - Work activity carried out within those prisons designated as Working Prisons.

However, it does also say: ‘the delivery of the OLASS offer should be contextualised in these areas and considered as a complementary activity, where the ORGANISATION would support learning, accreditation and embedded basic skills’. It also states that core functional skills can be delivered by: embedding in a vocational programme, where the learners’ interests and learning are sustained by the particular vocational activity or by embedding in arts, music and cookery (and similar programmes) where the interest of the learner is captured by the learning ‘vehicle’ (e.g. art).

The contract needs to be clearer about the importance of embedding learning across the prison establishment and in other activities as a means of developing an ‘engaging learning culture’ and reducing the silo education effect. Mechanisms should be put in place to promote co-ordination between the different departments where learning takes place and to enable prisoners to engage and record their learning, wherever they are in the prison. Education in prison should be understood as a learning activity rather than a place. The siloing of ‘education’ from other learning and reducing reoffending work is detrimental to achieving outcomes and works against developing a learning culture.

Branding

One simple solution shared by one prison with an engaging learning culture was the importance of ‘branding’.

One prisoner said *“They need to embed learning into the walls and fabric of the prison, a lot comes out of the language used”*.

Case study

At HMP Whatton the PLA were told that there is no ‘education’ department. Instead education has been re-branded as ‘College’. Even the officers on the wings in the morning shout out ‘anyone for College?’. This simple branding exercise, combined with regular ‘college’ open days and tours for staff and prisoners, has increased the engagement with prisoners who consider learning.

The PLA heard from prisoners in one prison who emphasised the importance of engaging with them as adult learners rather than school children. One said; *“we are not kids here, they need to change the way of teaching”*.

A participant in the expert roundtable commented *“stop patronising prisoners – get them involved in running activities in the prison”*. Therefore an engaging learning culture must also be reflective of their age and not infantilise the learners.

The public acceptability test

One significant barrier to an ‘engaging learning culture’ was identified by the PLA as ‘public acceptability’. This was highlighted in a recent parliamentary question concerning using arts to embed literacy and numeracy at a YOI;

Seema Malhotra MP (Feltham & Heston):

“How supportive is the Minister of creative agencies getting into prisons to help improve language and literacy, and is he aware of any barriers they might have experienced to running workshops in prisons?”

Jeremy Wright MP (Prisons Minister):

“I am certainly in favour of anything that can be demonstrated to assist in reducing reoffending, but there is another test that needs to be applied: a public acceptability test. The public have certain expectations of what should and should not happen in prison, so we need to apply that filter, but I am certainly interested in imaginative ideas that will help to drive down reoffending rates.”

What works must trump concerns about ‘public acceptability’ and more work must be done to explain to the public why engaging learning in prison will benefit society. The PLA is proud to play its part in this.

Enjoyable learning in prison?

Engaging learning by its nature has to be enjoyable to the participant. If the learning is enjoyable, then it is more likely the learner will learn and succeed and complete the course. However while policy and practice is determined by what is ‘publicly acceptable’, this is a barrier to achieving rehabilitation outcomes. The ‘intensive literacy and numeracy’ provision piloted in several prisons was evaluated by NIACE (Novitzky et al. 2013) who concluded that although it worked for motivated learners and for learning maths, it was not a ‘magic bullet’ and not appropriate for all learners as some will find the pace and pressure overwhelming, especially those with an antipathy to classroom learning where embedded learning in a vocational course or workshop may be more appropriate’. This highlights the importance of engaging learning as an inclusive approach to education in prisons.

In a study (Casey 2006) on embedded learning, involving 16 FE colleges, 79 vocational programmes and 1916 learners, researchers found retention rates were 16% higher in embedded courses and success rates on embedded courses were also higher. They also found that learners on embedded courses had more positive attitudes to the value of basic skills study. However they found that vocational and basic skills teachers could not be the same person, instead the best results were found when teachers with different skills sets worked as a team.

The conflict between 'enjoyment' and notions of 'punishment' was highlighted by a recent research report by the Arts Alliance (Bilby et al. 2013) who make the case also from an emotional and physical wellbeing perspective:

'All of the participants talked about the enjoyment that they gained from taking part in the projects. This is possibly a difficult notion to manage in a Criminal Justice System which places great value on economically valuable activity and 'proper punishment'. However enjoyment and wellbeing are linked, which is important in a system that needs to address the high levels of mental and physical ill health and the associated costs of these'.

What works must trump concerns about public acceptability to achieve desistance outcomes and policy makers need to be confident in explaining why an engaging learning approach is not being 'soft on crime' but in fact is helping to reduce reoffending therefore reducing the number of victims and reducing the cost to the public purse.

Recommendation 14. Aspirational.

Once engaged, many prisoners develop a thirst for learning. Prisoners who achieve their basic skills should be enabled to progress with learning to higher levels to reach their potential. Mechanisms to enable progression to happen should be supported.

From soaking in the bath to climbing mountains

It is well recorded that becoming engaged in learning often leads to a thirst for further learning (see Dept. BIS, 2013 and Champion, 2012). However the PLA heard from practitioners and learners who were frustrated they could not progress to higher levels in their chosen skill or subject area. Under previous OLASS contracts less than 1% of learning had been at level 3. The OLASS contracts place an emphasis at the start of a sentence on basic skills and then in the last few months on employability skills. This was described by the PLA as a 'bathtub', reflecting investment at the start and end of the sentence, but leaving prisoners, especially those with longer sentences, with a gap in learning in the middle.

An alternative model preferred by the PLA is of enabling prisoners to 'climb mountains'. Therefore once engaged in learning, momentum is maintained by providing continued access to a range of learning opportunities throughout their sentence. Of course sequencing is important, and specific vocational skills are best learnt near to release to avoid them becoming out of date, however there are many other types of learning that prisoners can be engaged with throughout their sentence, if this was the preferred model.

The benefit of an aspirational approach is not just limited to improving employability, but helps develop a new identity which promotes desistance. Self aspiration can also translate to a prisoner's children and raise their aspirations for their children's education.



Student loans

An example of a prison enabling higher level learning up to level three was HMP Lindholme, reported on in Inside Time newspaper in 2011. However due to recent changes requiring all students aged 24 and over to take out a student loan for level 3 and above learning, we understand these level three qualifications are no longer being offered to prisoners. Therefore another area which requires a 'what works' rather than 'public acceptability' approach relates to student loans for level three and above courses. Although in theory this policy means the public are not disadvantaged compared to prisoners, in reality as prisoners do not have the power to control staying in the same place for the duration of their course, like a student in the community, they risk taking out a loan and transferring before completion. In effect this policy prevents prisoners studying above level 2, despite employers requiring higher level qualifications.

Ofsted recently stated that '*progression opportunities for prisoners to higher level courses to improve their employability need improving*'. The only way now is by distance learning, however this does not provide a solution for more practical courses and also self-directed learning is not suitable for all prisoners. Therefore on this issue, policy makers should make the case that in this instance, in order to ensure prisoners achieve the level of qualifications employers require, prisoners should be enabled to study at this level without a loan. Long sentenced prisoners should not have to wait until the last six years of their sentence to study a degree, given the benefits in helping them cope with prison life described earlier in this report. It would also enable them to continue to progress their learning journey to Masters level if they wished and if they can obtain funding.

Distance learning support

Funding arrangements inhibit opportunities for progression via distance learning. The OLASS contracts do not link the level of funding to the level of support of distance learning delivered, although it is in the contract for OLASS providers to facilitate. Despite the availability of funding to pay for distance learning courses via statutory and charitable funding through Prisoners Education Trust, the number of applications for distance learning have reduced in 2013 compared to previous years and the ongoing support for distance learning prisoners, including access to IT and peer study sessions, has been reduced in some establishments. In order to facilitate an aspirational 'climbing mountains' approach, support for level three and above progression learning needs to be a key value.

Recommendation 15. Safe.

Learning areas such as the education department can be hot spots for tension and violence due to their communal nature. Staff must be supported appropriately in behaviour management. Measures should be taken to ensure staff and prisoners can teach and learn in safety. Safety can be both physical and emotional. A 'safe space' to learn is respectful, comfortable, builds on strengths and is motivational. Engagement and involving learners in solutions are key in developing 'safe spaces' to learn.

Safety is a key value both in the physical and emotional sense. Prisons can be violent places and education departments, where prisoners who would normally be separated can mix, can provide catalysts and hot spots for tension. This is compounded by long lessons and the need for more training to help staff to manage challenging behaviour effectively. Safety can be both physical and emotional. A 'safe space' to learn is respectful, comfortable, builds on strengths and is motivational. Engagement and involving learners in solutions are key in developing 'safe spaces' to learn.

Case study - Clean Break

In terms of emotional safety, a recent Q&A session given by ex-prisoners engaged with the arts organisation Clean Break after a performance to professionals at a NAICE conference highlighted their definition of a 'safe space' and its importance to their successful rehabilitation outcomes:

"It is not a typical college, it's a really safe space. It's like heaven, a mix of education and support."

"It is a safe space because it is non-judgemental, they nurture your feelings and what you've gone through."

"I can be myself there and express myself, you don't have to be closed up."

"There were boundaries, people were respectful. Equality and diversity is promoted. There is student support you can go to if things are happening in your personal life which are preventing you from learning"

"They are interested in you – they ask you 'what are you interested in? What do you want to do?'"

"They made me feel important."

Recommendation 16. Empowering.

Enabling learners to take responsibility will improve their outcomes, for example through developing learning plans, peer mentoring, service user participation (learner voice) and self-directed learning (as part of a blended learning model).

“Learning is something that should be done with prisoners, not to prisoners” one roundtable participant commented.

Prison removes responsibility from prisoners in many aspects of the regime. However education can be an opportunity to develop agency and the skills to gain some control over the direction of their lives. Agency is a key indicator of successful desistance (Maruna, 2001).

Empowerment can be developed through learning in various ways. Involving the learner in planning and reviewing their learning goals is a crucial first step. Enabling prisoners to develop skills to work as peer mentors, classroom assistants, learning champions and learner voice reps are other ways to develop agency. PET recently produced a toolkit ‘Involve, Improve, Inspire’ highlighting good practice case studies of prisons empowering prisoners to help shape the learning provision in their prison to better meet their needs (Champion & Aguiar, 2013).

Blockers to this need to be removed. One roundtable participant commented *“There needs to be much more effective use of mentors in prisons, there are too many barriers. Some governors don’t seem to understand the concept of peer mentoring. They seem to fear a collaborative approach. If we engage prisoners and they start to understand making decisions for themselves then it is positive. If not, passiveness can overcome prisoners and then when they’re released from prison they are swamped. It can work though, for example HMP Chelmsford”*.

Roundtable participants agreed that it can be hard for ex-prisoners to go back into prisons to help others and this should be resolved, as former prisoners often made excellent peer support workers.

Opportunities for self directed learning, as part of a blended learning model, also promotes personal autonomy and a sense of empowerment (Hughes 2012). For example, one prisoner learner told us *“meeting my first OU assignment deadline was the first deadline I had ever met”*. E-learning and informal self directed learning, such as reading or arts, can also promote empowerment and agency.

The skills and knowledge learning provides can also lead to a greater sense of empowerment. As a prisoner learner told us *“I didn’t think that education was going to lead to a job, I just wanted to empower myself”*.

Recommendation 17. Excellence.

There should be *‘the best teachers, the best managers and the best advisors’* (Ofsted, 2013). Achieving excellence requires a commitment to Continuing Professional Development of all staff. It also involves partnership working to secure a range of expertise and experience in those delivering learning in prisons including the Community and Voluntary Sector, employers, mainstream education providers, volunteers, prisoners and ex-prisoners.

Seizing the moment

A recent speech by Matthew Coffey, Director of Further Education and Skills at Ofsted said

*“We must seize this moment. This is a captive audience. In every single prison in the country we have the most fantastic opportunity to do amazing things with the hardest to help in our society. But it needs energy, determination, enthusiasm and expertise – it needs the **best** teachers, the **best** managers and the **best** advisers.”*

The PLA agree that there should be a drive to excellence and that CPD and partnership working are crucial factors.

Continuing Professional Development

One roundtable participant commented that *“it is systematically difficult to get CPD into prisons – there is a tendency to be focused on prison concerns such as security – educators are rarely asked what they want to have covered. Educators are really hungry for content. It’s essential there is CPD in any profession, else nothing gets disseminated. Many educators are having to arrange and attend training in their own time and at their own expense”*.

Others commented that Continuing Professional Development was particularly difficult with practitioners working on a sessional rather than full time basis and that any CPD offered tends to be for regime or security, rather than the improvement of teaching practice. Teachers and trainers who are given the opportunity to learn from each other and develop their practice through CPD opportunities will have more positive morale and the quality of their teaching will improve. PLA members The Institute

for Learning and the Institute for Education are working to develop tools for CPD provision specifically for prison educators, however regimes and contracts need to make this possible and it's importance needs to be recognised and promoted by management as important to improve quality. Recent research commissioned by the Arts Alliance found that the *'status of project facilitators as professionals'* in delivering arts interventions helped promote respect from participants and meant they valued their feedback and advice (Bilby et al. 2013)

University College Union (UCU) and Centre for Education in the Criminal Justice System (due to be published December 2013) A survey exploring the professional experiences and insights of prison educators. London: UCU.

278 prison educators responded to survey by UCU in 2013. Most respondents were highly qualified; 97.1% possessed a qualification at Level 4 or above and/or a teaching qualification. However, respondents stated that their Initial Teacher Education had not covered their particular needs as prison educators and that funding, time off and payment for Continuing Professional Development to develop both subject expertise and teaching methodologies were either in decline, or in many cases, non-existent. The quality of the training provision when available was criticised by 50.7% of the respondents, even though 64% reported that the training received over the last 18 months had been relevant to their role, but not to the subjects taught.

UCU make the following recommendations regarding CPD –

- The Education and Training Foundation (ETF) should support the development of specialist prison education modules for Initial Teacher Education programmes.
- The Offender Learning and Skills Service (OLASS) should establish guidelines on continuing professional development (CPD) provision for staff employed under OLASS contracts. In the interim, education providers applying for an OLASS contract should be required to set out how the CPD needs of its employees will be supported and funded.

CPD should also be available for other staff, including officers, managers, advisors and governors, if a learning culture is to be developed in a prison.

For example in HMP Highdown a range of uniformed and non-uniformed staff and teachers attended training delivered by St. Giles Trust in the principles of desistance and how to use that to improve their contacts with prisoners to help achieve better outcomes.

Partnership work

Excellence also involves prisons securing a range of expertise and experience in those delivering learning in prisons. This could include the Community and Voluntary Sector, employers, mainstream education providers, volunteers, prisoners and ex-prisoners. When involving prisoners or ex-prisoners in teaching or training, where possible they should receive proper training and support such as the Preparing to Teach in the Lifelong Learning Sector (PTLLS) qualifications.

Case study

At HMP Wandsworth, as part of their sports –based learning programme in the gym, invite in employers from the sports and fitness industry to co-deliver some of the sessions and to impart their expertise to prisoners wanting to find voluntary or work placements in the sector.

Acknowledgements

PLA members – see page 1

Beyond Employability roundtable event

Martine Lignon – Detention Advice Service
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 Andy Aresti – University of Westminster, Convict Criminology
 Helen Nicholls – Researcher, Hull University
 Sarah Turvey – Prison Reading Groups
 Jessica Plant – Arts Alliance
 Bob Knowles – Independent Monitoring Board
 Terri Bailey – Story Book Dads
 Clare Monohan – Rapt
 Ellie May – Rapt
 Noorun Khan – HMP Wormwood Scrubs

Learning Culture roundtable event

Lavina Grierson – HMP Shotts
 Ardeanne Llewellyn – HMP Coldingley
 Claire Veillard – HMP Wandsworth
 Tereasa Adams – HMP Parc
 Georgina Hill – HMP High Point
 Liz Cox – Education Manger – HMP Whatton
 David Bird – HMP Ranby
 Karen McWilliams – HMP Ranby
 Christine Fisher – International Centre for Prison Studies
 Chris Coupland – HMP Doncaster
 Gary Lyttle – HMP Swaleside
 Sylvia Hind – Media for Development
 Charlie Weinberg – Safeguard
 John Hancock – Prison Officers Association
 Genevieve Clarke – Reading Agency
 Irene Garrow – English PEN
 Jackie Hewitt-Maine – The Cascade Foundation

Learning Journey Roundtable event

Chris Rushton – HMP Low Newton
 Max Tucker – User Voice
 Janine Windridge - Education Funding Agency
 Jane Hurry – CECJS, Institute of Education
 David Aherne – Shannon Trust
 Juliet Hope – Start Up
 Start User Service user
 Jen Walters – Ofsted
 Maggie Evans – Longford Trust
 Emma Hughes – Lecturer / researcher, California University
 Amber Shotton – A4E
 Toni Fazaeli – Institute for Learning

Other contributors:

Peter Dawson – Sodexo, Former Governor
 Eoin McLennan – Murray – HMP Coldingley, PGA President
 Kenny Brown – Governor, HMP Wandsworth
 Helen Maxwell – Open University
 Shane Cowen – Institute for Learning
 Ayesha Williams – Association of Colleges
 Tanya Tracey – Start Up
 Angela Nartey – University and Colleges Union
 Ama Dixon – NIACE

Learner Voice

Five prisoners from HMP Wandsworth
 Nicolle
 Graham Godden – Yes Plus
 Emma
 Frank Harris
 Lloyd Codrington – Bluespot Network
 Abbie - Start Up service user

PET staff:

Alexandra Marks
 Rod Clark
 Nina Champion
 Clare Taylor
 Susannah Henty
 Intern – Steph Ransome
 Trustee – Geoffrey Wolfson

Attendees at PLA meetings:

Sharon Barratt – NOMS
 George Barrow – MoJ
 Chris Dixon – SFA
 Eoin Parker – BIS
 Alison Perry – HMIP
 Mimi Prado-Mari – EFA
 Kathy Prior – DWP
 Ray Plummer -SFA (NCS)
 Sheena Maberley – NOMS
 Sarah Stear – SFA
 Teresa Bailey – BIS
 John Scott - NOMS
 Richard Ward – BIS
 Rob Wye - LSIS

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Mitcham · Surrey · CR4 4BU

Tel 020 8648 7760 · Fax 020 8648 7762
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